



**GREAT JOURNEYS
NEW ZEALAND**

AOTEAROA BY TRAIN

Signature | NZ Up Close Tour Auckland to Queenstown. 17 days

<p>Day 1 Auckland</p>	<p>Kia Ora!</p> <p>Welcome to Auckland, New Zealand’s City of Sails! Auckland is known for its multi-cultural hub of food, music, arts, and culture.</p> <p>After checking into your hotel and reading your welcome letter from your Tour Director, head out and explore all that Auckland has to offer. This is the perfect opportunity to visit the Sky Tower or shop along bustling Queen Street. You may even fancy a drink in one of the charming bars or eateries of Vulcan Lane.</p> <p>Your tour officially begins this evening, as you join your fellow travellers and Tour Director this evening for a welcome reception.</p> <p>Accommodation 4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (1 Night)</p> <p>Meals Included Dinner with Welcome Drink</p> <p>Activities Welcome Dinner</p>
<p>Day 2 Hamilton</p>	<p>The Northern Explorer Scenic Train The Beginning of your Scenic Journey</p> <p>Your journey awaits as you join the Northern Explorer scenic train. Marvel at rural New Zealand’s lush landscapes from the comfort of your scenic carriage. From the sparkling waters of the Waitemata Harbour to the green pastures of the Waikato – you won’t want to miss a moment.</p>



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	<p>Arriving in Hamilton, your coach awaits you to bring you to the famous Hamilton Gardens. Engross yourself in the garden's collection of themed rooms as you are led by an experienced guide. Learn about the history, context and meaning of each garden before finishing this delightful morning with a picnic on the lush lawns. Surrounded by beauty, you will be in utter bliss.</p> <p>In the early afternoon, enjoy some free time in the heart of Hamilton before departing for an evening visit to Raglan – a seaside surfer town. It's here that you'll enjoy a Sunset Dinner Cruise on the pristine harbour.</p> <p>Accommodation 4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (2 Nights in Hamilton)</p> <p>Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Northern Explorer Scenic Train Experience• Hamilton Gardens Guided Tour including a picnic lunch• Raglan Sunset Dinner Cruise
<p>Day 3 Hamilton</p>	<p>Discover Endangered and Bioluminescent Species Dazzled by Nature</p> <p>This morning you will depart for your next exciting excursion – Maungatautari Sanctuary Mountain.</p> <p>Let your guide transport you into an ancient world of ecological wonders as you explore New Zealand's very own pest-free environment, within native forest. On this excursion, you will walk through the home of some of New Zealand's most endangered</p>



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	<p>species. Discover North Island's robins, tomtits, kākā, pōpokotea, bellbirds, hihi, tīeke, fantails, kereru and wētā. This pre-human paradise has one of the world's longest pest-proof fences.</p> <p>Your expedition continues after a lunch stop in New Zealand's "Kiwiana Capital", Otorohanga. Make sure you capture a photo of the giant Kiwi birds! Next, discover the famous Waitomo Glow worm Caves and be dazzled by the seemingly star-filled sky as you glide by boat through this impressive cave formation.</p> <p>Tonight, explore Hamilton's riverside walks and shops on this free evening. Enjoy one of the many nearby restaurants as the sun sets over the Waikato River.</p> <p>Accommodation</p> <p>4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (2 Nights in Hamilton)</p> <p>Meals</p> <p>Breakfast</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sanctuary Mountain Walk• Waitomo Glowworm Caves
<p>Day 4 Ohakune</p>	<p>Discover Tongariro National Park</p> <p>Joining the Northern Explorer train once again, today you'll soar over icy mountain streams as you travel to Tongariro National Park, the home of three volcanic mountains.</p> <p>Tongariro National Park has a diverse range of ecosystems and spectacular landscapes. In 1993, it was recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site and was the first property to be inscribed with the criteria describing the cultural values it holds for Māori.</p> <p>Enjoy a mini excursion up to Tūroa ski field. Here you'll want to capture a panoramic photo</p>



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	<p>of Middle Earth before descending into Ohakune.</p> <p>Tonight, enjoy a special dinner with your fellow travellers.</p> <p>Accommodation 4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (2 nights in Ohakune)</p> <p>Meals Breakfast, Dinner</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Northern Explorer Scenic Train Experience• Afternoon Excursion to view northern volcanic landscapes
<p>Day 5 Ohakune</p>	<p>Explore Tongariro National Park</p> <p>Today is free for you to discover one of the region's many exciting excursions. Choose from the optional activities on offer and personalise your perfect holiday. Perhaps you will hop aboard a rail cart journey or join a horse trekking experience that takes you along expansive hills, mountains, rivers and into native forest.</p> <p>If you're after an active day, why not explore Ohakune's historical cycle trail? Rent e-bikes and discover old viaducts, tunnels, old settlers' camps and reclaimed native forests along the Old Coach Road.</p> <p>Accommodation 4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (2 nights in Ohakune)</p> <p>Meals Breakfast</p>



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Day 6

Wellington

The Northern Explorer Scenic Train

Your day begins with an elevated experience up the northern face of Mt Ruapehu for panoramic views of the volcanic landscape. Drink in the views of Mt Ngāuruhoe, Mt Tongariro, and beyond across the central North Island.

Joining the Northern Explorer train once again, waving goodbye to Tongariro National Park, as you settle into your uber-comfortable seat. Don't get too comfortable though; dramatic rivers, gorges and ravines are just around the bend! Stretch your legs and explore the open-air carriage to get the best view from the train.

A little later, why not indulge in a treat from our onboard licensed café? As you glide through rich green farmland and past dramatic coastlines, enjoy the picturesque Porirua Harbour as you arrive into Wellington.

Welcome to Wellington – New Zealand's windy capital! You've arrived at Wellington Railway Station which is just a stone's throw from downtown, the Beehive and Parliament Buildings. You won't want to waste a moment of time after checking into the hotel - your evening is free to explore this culinary capital from Queen's Wharf to Cuba street and beyond.

Accommodation

4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (2 nights in Wellington)

Meals

Breakfast

Activities

- Northern Explorer Scenic Train
- Morning excursion to view southern volcanic landscapes



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<p>Day 7 Wellington</p>	<p>Explore Wellington</p> <p>The perfect day does exist – and it includes exploring Wellington!</p> <p>Today is free for you to experience vibrant Wellington as you please. Start by joining our Wellington City introduction tour and then head off to explore Cuba Street’s cafes, bookstores, and eccentric shops. Get cultured at Te Papa, New Zealand’s National Museum, or visit Zealandia Eco-Sanctuary to surround yourself by native birdlife and regenerating forest. You won’t get bored with the plethora of activities on offer. From coffee, culture, historic buildings to botanic gardens and much more... the list goes on! If you need any suggestions or recommendations, just reach out to your helpful Tour Director or our Travel Centre to pre-book an experience.</p> <p>Enjoy dinner tonight with your fellow travellers.</p> <p>Accommodation</p> <p>4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (2 nights in Wellington)</p> <p>Meals</p> <p>Breakfast, Dinner</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wellington City Introduction Tour• Group Dinner
<p>Day 8 Picton</p>	<p>Crossing the Cook Strait</p> <p>Adventure to the South</p> <p>This morning you will say poroporoaki ki te motu raki (good-bye to the North Island) as you sail to the South Island, crossing the Cook Strait on the Interislander ferry. As the shores of the North Island slowly disappear, settle down in the comfy seats in the Premium Lounge. Treat yourself to a mimosa and enjoy a hearty seafaring breakfast but save some room for morning tea!</p>



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	<p>On your journey across Cook Strait you may spot pods of dolphins playing in the wake or if you are very lucky, whales. Don't spend all your time inside – as you enter the stunning Queen Charlotte Sound enjoy the views as you cruise past the remnants of whaling stations, remote working sheep farms, pristine native bush and mussel farms. Admire the beauty of this coastal paradise as you arrive into the gateway of the South Island, Picton. Step off the Interislander Ferry and join your next world-class experience aboard a Marlborough Wine Tour.</p> <p>Accommodation 4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (1 night)</p> <p>Meals Breakfast</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interislander Ferry• Marlborough Wine Tour
<p>Day 9 Kaikōura</p>	<p>The Coastal Pacific Scenic Train</p> <p>The morning is yours to explore Picton. Meander through the impressive Edwin Fox (one of the world's oldest surviving merchant sailing ships), local craft stores, art galleries and coastal walks. Enjoy the waterfront cafes before boarding the Coastal Pacific train for another highlight rail journey through the Marlborough Wine Region.</p> <p>Today you will be travelling into Kaikōura. Relax as the train glides across remote beaches, between mountains and sea, on a timeless journey of breath-taking beauty. Keep an eye out for the fur seals lazing on the rocks!</p> <p>Once in Kaikōura, the evening will be yours to enjoy some iconic kai moana (seafood) at one</p>



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	<p>of the quaint restaurants before enjoying your luxurious ocean-front hotel.</p> <p>Accommodation 4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (1 night)</p> <p>Meals Breakfast</p> <p>Activities Coastal Pacific Scenic Train Journey</p>
<p>Day 10 Christchurch</p>	<p>Explore Kaikōura</p> <p>Today will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience of whale, dolphin or albatross watching! Enjoy today's thrill of an up-close encounter with wildlife. If you would prefer to gain an aerial experience of the fantastic vistas and beyond, why not request a plane ride to capture the true grandeur of it all?</p> <p>After this outstanding experience, we're sure you will be feeling peckish. Head to the beach to sample some iconic New Zealand food - you can't go wrong with the humble Kiwiana fish and chips. Work off the deep-fried delights by wandering through the wonderful array of local artisan stores and souvenir shops.</p> <p>In the late afternoon, your highlight day will continue as you rejoin the Coastal Pacific Train en route to Christchurch. The spectacular scenery doesn't cease to amaze as you journey south through the rolling hills and extensive plains. Enjoy the relaxing journey with a glass of wine in hand as you indulge in a gourmet meal from the onboard scenic café.</p> <p>Sit back and relax for the remainder of the evening before hitting the town the following day.</p> <p>Accommodation 4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (1 night)</p>



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	<p>Meals Breakfast and Dinner on the train</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice of Whale, Dolphin, or Albatross Experience • Coastal Pacific Train Journey
<p>Day 11 Christchurch</p>	<p>Explore Christchurch Christchurch, the hub for South Island exploration is also a wonderful city that blends modern architecture and technology with the 19th-century Anglican 'gothic revival' architectural influence. Often remembered for its earthquake in 2011, the city is rebuilding itself into a multi-cultural haven.</p> <p>Today you are free to explore the museums, Riverside Markets, Punting on the Avon, Gondola and botanical gardens. There is also a multitude of delicious cafes tucked into quaint side streets we're sure you will love.</p> <p>This evening you will re-join your fellow travellers for a special dinner on Christchurch's historic dinner tram. Enjoy a wonderful circuit of the city while indulging in fantastic conversation and seasonal cuisine.</p> <p>Accommodation 4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (2 Nights in Christchurch)</p> <p>Meals Breakfast, Dinner</p> <p>Activities Christchurch Historic Tramway Dinner</p>
<p>Day 12 Hokitika</p>	<p>The TranzAlpine Scenic Train The moment has come to experience the world-famous TranzAlpine journey through the Southern Alps emerging in the West Coast! On this fantastic escape, you will see epic vistas, soar on the edges of the ice fed</p>



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	<p>Waimakariri River, traverse through the Great Divide, and experience ever changing landscapes. The natural scenery isn't the only marvel though. The TranzAlpine passes through the Otira Tunnel, a true engineering marvel of 100 years!</p> <p>Once you arrive on the West Coast, a private coach will take you even further off the beaten track to Punakaiki Pancake Rocks. Here you will explore curious limestone formations and blowholes before finishing your day in the ocean-front town of Hokitika.</p> <p>Accommodation 4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (1 night)</p> <p>Meals Included Breakfast, Morning Tea and Lunch on train</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TranzAlpine Scenic Journey• Punakaiki Pancake Rock Excursion
<p>Day 13 Franz Josef</p>	<p>Explore the West Coast</p> <p>This morning you'll start your West Coast adventure by visiting one of the South Island's most popular activities – the Treetop Aerial Walkway. This elevated adventure will get you acquainted with the locals – the ancient Rimu and Kamahi trees.</p> <p>After your sky-high experience, continue south into Glacier Country. Franz Josef Glacier is quite special in that it survives in coastal rainforest temperatures. With a short walk to a viewpoint, you'll get a fantastic view of the vast valley, as well as a sneak peek of Franz Josef Glacier itself. If you would prefer to get up close, we recommend booking an optional helicopter flight. This will ensure you are getting the best possible view of this natural wonder.</p> <p>After indulging in the local activities and retail</p>



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	<p>therapy in Franz Josef's souvenir shops, join your group for an impeccable highlight meal at Te Waonui Forest Retreat.</p> <p>Accommodation 4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (1 night)</p> <p>Meals Breakfast, Dinner</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• West Coast Treetops Aerial Walkway & Cafe• Short Nature Walk to Glacier Viewing Point• 5-Course Degustation Meal at Te Waonui Forest Retreat
<p>Day 14 Queenstown</p>	<p>A Unique Road Trip Adventure</p> <p>Today you will explore the Haast Pass. With changing landscapes around every bend, this journey of about five hours to Queenstown, will be one of the most scenic drives you may ever take. While aboard an exciting river boat and private coach, marvel at the beaches, crystal blue lakes and rivers, mountain peaks, lush vineyards, charming plains and majestic glaciers as your Tour Director guides you between local hidden gems. Stop in unique locations that only locals know about. Emerging on the other side of the pass, explore the local fruit hotspot – Mrs. Jones' Fruit Stall before exploring the cobblestone streets of Arrowtown. After an exciting plunge into the history of this gold rush village, you will arrive in the world-famous resort town of Queenstown!</p> <p>Accommodation 4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (3 Nights in Queenstown)</p> <p>Meals</p>



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	<p>Breakfast, Dinner</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scenic coach journey through Haast Pass with stops along the way• Haast River Safari• Mrs Jones' Fruit Stall and Arrowtown Visit
<p>Day 15 Queenstown</p>	<p>Explore Milford Sound The 8th Wonder of the World</p> <p>Make sure you charge your camera before you set off on today's adventure. Today you're heading to Milford Sound/ Piopiotahi to be engulfed in towering peaks and waltz through plunging valleys.</p> <p>After travelling through native rainforests, meadows, and past beautiful reflective pools you will join your cruise in Milford Sound. Enjoy one of the most stunning natural features New Zealand has to offer. Aboard the cruise you will meander down the sound to experience the rumble of Bowen and Stirling Falls as they plummet from glacial hanging valleys. Marvel at the sheer pinnacle of Mitre Peak, rising from the deep waters of the fjord.</p> <p>Or if you'd like to soar like the Piopio (ancient bird), why not elevate your day by booking a flight into the Sound by plane?</p> <p>After this adventure, you will be heading back to Queenstown for a relaxing evening.</p> <p>Accommodation 4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (3 Nights in Queenstown)</p> <p>Meals Breakfast, Lunch</p> <p>Activities</p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Milford Sounds Day Excursion
Day 16 Queenstown	<p>Explore Queenstown</p> <p>Queenstown truly has something for everyone. Personalise your day to be as active or relaxed as you'd like. Whether it's exploring Walter Peak on a horse trekking adventure, hopping on the gondola for inspiring views, or sipping wine in Gibbston Valley, there is no shortage of activities to delight your senses.</p> <p>Enjoy a 'final hurrah' this evening as we board the TSS Earnslaw Steamship Cruise, dinner and show. Reflect on your great adventure with your fellow travellers as you cruise to your dining experience at Walter peak overlooking the beautiful Table Bay. Sit back and watch a true Kiwi experience as you learn about sheep shearing and dog herding in this beautiful setting. This evening will truly encapsulate your great journey as a truly New Zealand highlight.</p> <p>Not ready to call it a night? Sip cocktails and indulge in Queenstown's exciting nightlife alongside the sparkling Lake Wakatipu.</p> <p>Accommodation</p> <p>4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (3 Nights in Queenstown)</p> <p>Meals</p> <p>Breakfast, Dinner</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Farewell Dinner at Walters Peak• TSS Earnslaw Cruise & Farm Show
Day 17 Queenstown	<p>Departing Queenstown</p> <p>Your journey will end after enjoying a final breakfast with your fellow travellers.</p> <p>Not ready to leave Queenstown? Reach out to our Travel Centre to pre-organise your extended stay.</p>



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	<p>Meals Breakfast</p> <p>Activities Transfer to airport</p>
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