Australian Escapes Holiday & Travel Club
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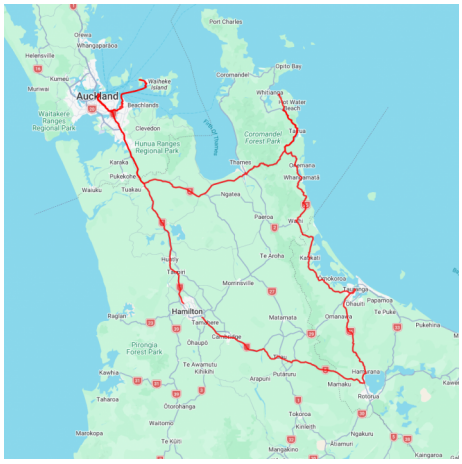


On Island Time

Slow down and reconnect with a journey designed for the soul. Spend your first days savoring island life on Waiheke before heading to the golden corridors of the Coromandel. Your path leads to the heart of Māori wellness in Rotorua, blending ancient forest traditions with modern luxury, and finishing with a sophisticated urban retreat in Auckland.

Starts in:	Auckland
Finishes in:	Auckland
Length:	9days / 8nights
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: Unlimited kms

Included activity: The Visitor Promise - Cultural Learning Course

Included activity: Private transfer Auckland Airport to Fullers Ferry Terminal with Tourcorp

Included activity: Waiheke Island Gourmet Food and Wine Tour

Includes: Fully inclusive rental car insurance (excess may apply)

Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring

Included activity: Electronic Travel Guide and In-Country Support App

Included activity: Fullers Ferry Auckland to Waiheke Island (Return)

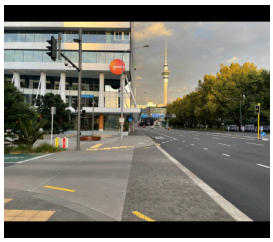
Included activity: Cathedral Cove Scenic Cruise

plus much more...

Day 1







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.

Private transfer Auckland Airport to Fullers Ferry Terminal with Tourcorp

A private transfer will meet you on arrival at the airport and transfer you to the Fullers Ferry Terminal.

Fullers Ferry Auckland to Waiheke Island

Take a scenic approximately 45-minute cruise through the Hauraki Gulf between the Auckland down town ferry terminal and Matiatia Wharf on Waiheke Island.

Your accommodation: The Boatshed

Set above the sands of Oneroa Bay, The Boatshed pairs maritime architecture with easy island life. Designed with classic weatherboard lines, sea-breeze louvres, and private sun decks, each suite frames open Hauraki Gulf views. Days move comfortably between garden corners, beach tracks, and vineyard dining, offering a calm, polished base just a short transfer from Auckland.



Day 2



Waiheke Island Gourmet Food and Wine Tour

Enjoy succulent fresh oysters, award-winning olive oil and other locally-produced speciality foods, accompanied by wines from some of the Island’s top boutique vineyards. The guide will provide an entertaining and informative commentary along the way.
Visit an award-winning olive oil mill, followed by two vineyards, each offering a range of gourmet tastes to accompany the wines. A platter lunch at one of Waiheke's top vineyard restaurants is also included.

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Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 3







Fullers Ferry Waiheke Island to Auckland

Take a scenic approximately 45-minute cruise through the Hauraki Gulf between Matiatia Wharf on Waiheke Island and the Auckland downtown ferry terminal.

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 Cooks Beach

Cross the fertile soil of Hauraki Plains towards the Thames Estuary, a haven for wildlife in particular the shore birds at Miranda. Arriving into the historic gold town of Thames you then cross the Southern Coromandel Ranges and onto the wonderful east coast of the peninsula and the harbour town of Tairua. Paku Hill offers spectacular views over the natural harbour and the Pacific Ocean. Close by is the famous Hot Water Beach and the holiday town of Hahei. Keep driving up Purangi Road towards the coastal views and the safe, crescent shaped white stretch of sand that is Cooks Beach.

Cooks Beach & Flaxmill Bay

Cooks Beach is a stunning stretch of golden sand located on the southern shores of Mercury Bay. One of the most enjoyable ways to reach it is from Whitianga, by taking the short ferry ride to Ferry Landing. From there, you can walk to Flaxmill Bay either via Purangi Road or the scenic Whitianga Rock Walk track, then continue on to Cooks Beach. For breathtaking views, the Shakespeare Cliff Lookout track offers a rewarding walk to the top of the headland, with panoramic vistas over the bay. A side track also leads down to the secluded and picturesque Lonely Bay.

Your accommodation: Mercury Ridge

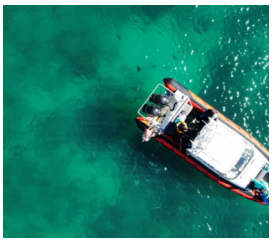
Perched above Cooks Beach, Mercury Ridge pairs Tuscan-inspired design with expansive Mercury Bay views. Set among native bush and vines, five light-filled suites offer a grounded, peaceful setting with attentive host care. Enjoy terrace breakfasts, quiet evenings, and easy access to local tracks, wineries, and the ferry. It is a refined, effortless coastal base.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 4







Coves, Caves and Coastline Cruise from Whitianga

Explore the volcanic coastline with its many caves, blowholes and golden beaches all from the comfort and safety of an ex coastguard 28 ft cruiser. Departing from Whitianga Wharf journey past the towering Shakespeare's Cliffs and historic Cooks Beach. Visit Cathedral Cove and the islands in the marine reserve. There is also a chance to swim with the abundant fish in the reserve (on board snorkel gear provided - don't forget your swimsuit and towel). For those who prefer to stay dry an underwater camera relays images to an onboard TV.

Your accommodation: Mercury Ridge



Perched above Cooks Beach, Mercury Ridge pairs Tuscan-inspired design with expansive Mercury Bay views. Set among native bush and vines, five light-filled suites offer a grounded, peaceful setting with attentive host care. Enjoy terrace breakfasts, quiet evenings, and easy access to local tracks, wineries, and the ferry. It is a refined, effortless coastal base.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 5







Cooks Beach to Rotorua

Heading south from the Coromandel Peninsula you pass through the seaside town of Whangamata - a popular location for Kiwi holidaymakers and home to one of the best beaches in the region. Next you come to the old mining town of Waihi which still has an operating open cast gold mine (Martha Mine) that can be viewed from a vantage point just above the town centre.
For rail enthusiasts, the Goldfields Railway operates passenger trains along a scenic and historic section of track towards Waikino. The route now takes you into the Bay of Plenty and the port town of Tauranga before you head along the scenic Pyes Pa Road to Rotorua. For Lord of the Rings fans, a detour to Matamata is recommended as this is the location of the Hobbiton film set. Arriving into Rotorua from the north you are welcomed by the spectacular view of the lake.

Hosted Restorative Journey Package with Wai Ariki Hot Springs and Spa

Indulge your senses in a Restorative Journey (Wai Whakaora), a thoughtfully designed therapeutic experience inspired by the practices and culture of Ngāti Whakaue. Embrace the healing power of the natural environment as your senses awaken through a series of hot and cold therapies. Your journey begins beneath a cascading waterfall, cleansing your body and mind. Transition to Te Ahi Tupua, where a sequence of hot and cold immersions invigorates and rejuvenates. Relax in the soothing waters of the Geothermal Pool, sourced from the renowned Rachel Spring. Follow this with a refreshing cold plunge, easing muscle tension and reducing inflammation. Conclude your experience in the Kohu Wai Arik steam room, where heated stones create a serene space for reflection and relaxation, leaving you revitalised and restored.

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 6







Guided Cultural Eco-Tour with Whirinaki Forest Footsteps - Lunch Included

Step into the ancient and enchanting Whirinaki Forest for a guided cultural walking tour just under an hour from Rotorua. Explore towering 1,000-year-old trees, discover the healing properties of native plants, and connect with Māori heritage through traditional welcomes and stories. Along the way, take time to slow down, breathe in the fresh air, and soak in the sights, sounds, and scents of the forest, spot native birds, and savour a picnic lunch with kawakawa tea. Perfect for nature lovers and culture seekers alike, this immersive experience blends New Zealand’s rich natural and cultural history for an unforgettable day in the heart of one of the country’s most sacred forests.

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

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Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 7







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.

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 8







Rotorua to Hamilton

Today the drive to Hamilton takes you through the heart of the Waikato and its rich dairy pastures. Stop in the creative town of Tirau and wander through its many arts and crafts stores. Continue on through the equine town of Cambridge before arriving into Hamilton, New Zealand's largest inland settlement.

Private tour and picnic for two in Hamilton Gardens

Telling the story of gardens through themed collections, Hamilton Gardens explores different civilizations, and recreates historically important garden styles from all over the world.
You will be guided on a journey of discovery along paths delivering mysterious surprises. From a peaceful Sung Dynasty Chinese Scholar's garden to an Italian Renaissance garden, there are 21 themed garden areas with more being developed. Hamilton Gardens is not a botanical garden. Instead, it's a unique and internationally recognised concept that has been compared to a museum. Each garden collection has historic integrity and provides a window into the story of civilizations, their arts, beliefs and life styles.

Hamilton to Auckland City

Heading north you follow the Waikato River towards Auckland City. Auckland City is New Zealand's largest, with a population of around 1.5 million people (about one third of the national population), spread over approximately 60 square kilometres. There is somewhere for every visitor to feel comfortable and right at home as each suburb has its own unique style and atmosphere, from the vibrant and trendy fashion and cuisine found on Ponsonby and Parnell Roads to the breathtaking native bush and beaches of the West Coast. One of the worlds great cities Auckland is full of life and opportunities to explore are endless.

Your accommodation: Park Hyatt Auckland

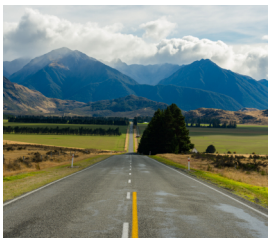
Park Hyatt Auckland is perfectly located on the water’s edge and will offer expansive views across Wynyard Quarter's Lighter Basin and out to the Waitematā Harbour.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 9




Return your rental car

Return your rental vehicle to your designated depot before your next adventure.

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:	Auckland
Tour length:	9
Accomodation:	Boutique Lodges & Hotels
Car/transport type:	

Accommodation summary

Day 1	The Boatshed
Day 2	The Boatshed
Day 3	Mercury Ridge
Day 4	Mercury Ridge
Day 5	Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel
Day 6	Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel
Day 7	Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel
Day 8	Park Hyatt Auckland