Australian Escapes Holiday & Travel Club
1800 669 579
australianescapes.com.au



Aotearoa's Finest: Auckland to Wellington Journey

Experience Aotearoa with everything thoughtfully arranged, so you can simply relax into the journey. Travel from Auckland's lively harbour to Rotorua's bubbling geothermal landscapes, continue through the sun-soaked vineyards of Hawke's Bay, and finish in the creative capital of Wellington. Along the way, enjoy handpicked stays, memorable experiences, and a pace that allows you to truly take it all in, perfect for those wanting to see the best of New Zealand.

Starts in:	Auckland
Finishes in:	Wellington
Length:	8days / 7nights
Accommodation:	Luxury Lodges
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: The Visitor Promise - Cultural Learning Course

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

Included activity: Private Transfer Auckland Airport to your Auckland Accommodation with Tourcorp

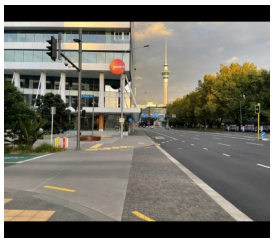
Included activity: Private tour and picnic for two in Hamilton Gardens

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 your Auckland Accommodation with Tourcorp

You will be met at the Auckland airport by your private driver and be transferred to your Auckland accommodation.

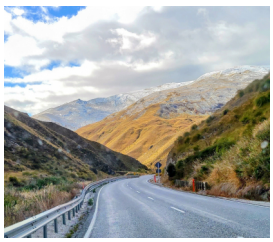
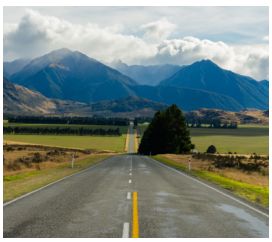
Your accommodation: Park Hyatt Auckland

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: Dinner



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 Hamilton City

Just 1 hour south of Auckland is Hamilton City, New Zealand's largest inland settlement. Centred on the Mighty Waikato River the city grew from the abandoned Maori Settlement that the Waikato Militia then occupied. The river has provided a very important trade route for many centuries and today still provides power and water. Hamilton Gardens spectacular 58 hectares of displays and collections provide a wonderful sanctuary within the city for its residents and visitors. The Waikato Museum of Art and History boasts an impressive collection of Maori wood carvings, many recovered from local swamps and waterways. The MV Waipa Delta still plies the waters of the Waikato River taking trips along the waterway. This 1877 vessel takes visitors from Memorial Park along the river and its classic bridges and picturesque tree lined banks. A good selection of cafes, restaurants and shopping is available in the town centre.

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 Rotorua

Heading east from Hamilton you pass through Cambridge, a bustling little town with more than its fair share of antique and bric a brac stores. The region is also famous for the number of horse studs and this is clearly evident as you approach and depart the town. A little further is the township of Tirau, home to the largest tin sheep and sheepdog, but it also offers a surprising number of bric a brac, art, craft and antique stores if you feel like browsing.
Arriving into the City of Rotorua the regions geothermal activity becomes evident as you see steam rising from the roadside and surrounding hills.
Considered the cultural centre for the Maori people, Rotorua is the ideal place to gain an insight into the history and culture. The Rotorua Museum located in the government gardens is outstanding and its displays and presentations focus on the local Maori tribes and the major events through history that have affected them. Dominating the display is the devastating volcanic eruption of Mt. Tarawera in 1886 but also of great interest is the Maori battalion display which portrays stories of this once feared military unit.
Nearby Ohinemutu Village is the original site of the first Maori settlers in the area and despite its now modern surroundings and buildings you can still gain a sense of what the original village was like. The magnificent meeting house and historic carvings along with the unique 'Tudor-style' St Faiths Church feature in many visitors photo albums.
One of the most popular introductions to the Maori Culture is through an evening at Mitai Maori Village where you can enjoy performances and demonstrations followed by a traditionally cooked hangi meal.
Of course Rotorua is also a great place to enjoy many other activities including, fishing, 4WD trips, relaxing spa treatments, mountain biking, walking and hiking plus helicopter and float plane trips.

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: Solitaire Lodge

Set on a tree-lined peninsula on Lake Tarawera, Solitaire Lodge pairs light timber interiors with wide views of Mount Tarawera. Suite balconies look directly over the bay, drawing in native forest and lake air. Serving as a launch point for private boat charters, thermal springs, and trout fishing, it provides a calm, grounded base in Rotorua's volcanic country.

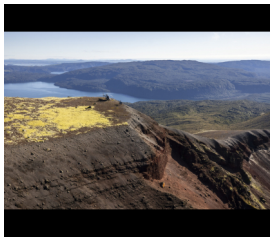
Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Speciality Dinner



Day 3







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.

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: Solitaire Lodge



Set on a tree-lined peninsula on Lake Tarawera, Solitaire Lodge pairs light timber interiors with wide views of Mount Tarawera. Suite balconies look directly over the bay, drawing in native forest and lake air. Serving as a launch point for private boat charters, thermal springs, and trout fishing, it provides a calm, grounded base in Rotorua's volcanic country.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 4







Rotorua to Napier via Taupō

This drive will take you through the thermal region just south of Rotorua. Home to a plethora of unique geothermal attractions including boiling mud pits, natural hot springs and steaming geysers, this area is a must do before you move on to Napier. Notable attractions are Wai-O-Tapu, Waimangu and Craters of the Moon. Continue on to Taupō and marvel at the lake, a giant crater formed following a volcanic eruption in the year 180 CE. As you approach the town, be sure to stop at Huka Falls to view the spectacular sight of hundreds of cubic metres of water spilling every second down the narrow 11 metre drop. For an extra thrill take a jet-boat ride at the base of the falls. Leaving Taupō, follow the road as it climbs the rugged Ahimanawa Range before descending back down the Pacific Coast to art deco coastal township of Napier.

Craters of the Moon Geothermal Walk

Located a few minutes north of Taupō this geothermal park known as Craters of the Moon has a great self guided 30 minute walk through steaming craters and bubbling mud pools. Well marked walkways with interpretive boards guide you through one of the regions many active volcanic parks.

Napier City

Napier, a coastal gem, is famed for its 1930s Art Deco architecture, the annual Art Deco Weekend, stately Norfolk pines, nearby wineries, and fresh local produce. With a Mediterranean climate and over 2,200 hours of sunshine annually, it boasts a thriving café culture set against stunning heritage buildings. The city center has around 30 cafés within walking distance, while Ahuriri, just beyond Bluff Hill, offers more upscale dining. Marine Parade overlooks the Pacific Ocean and Cape Kidnappers, home to the world’s largest mainland gannet colony. Visitors can explore Ocean Spa, the Hawke's Bay Museum, and the National Aquarium of New Zealand
Bluff Hill, a key landmark, provides sweeping views of Napier, Perfume Point, Westshore Beach, and the busy Port of Napier, which exports timber, fruit, and meat worldwide.
In 1931, Napier was devastated by a 7.8-magnitude earthquake, New Zealand’s worst natural disaster. Fires ravaged the city. Rebuilding efforts transformed Napier and Hastings into modern cities, while the uplifted Ahuriri Lagoon created much-needed land for expansion.

Hawkes Bay Twilight Odyssey Tour with Odyssey NZ - Dinner Included

Savour a progressive culinary journey through Hawke's Bay's vineyards. Start with a boutique wine tasting, absorb the awe-inspiring views from Te Mata Peak, indulge in a gourmet main at a top winery restaurant, and finish with a luxurious dessert at Mission Estate. Fine food, exceptional wine, and stunning scenery await!

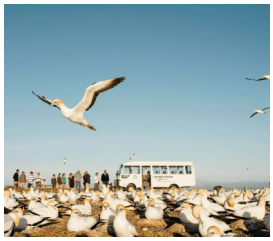
Your accommodation: Craggy Range

Set directly among the vines at Craggy Range’s Giants Winery, these two-bedroom cottages look toward the open pastures of the Tukituki River valley. Light-filled spaces and private terraces open to vineyard rows beneath Te Mata Peak. With en-suite bedrooms and a generous kitchen, each cottage offers an effortless base for estate dining and exploring Hawke’s Bay wine country.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 5





Explore Hawkes Bay

Discover Hawke’s Bay, known in Māori as Te Matau-a-Māui or the fish hook of Māui. This is a region renowned for its Mediterranean charm, iconic Art Deco architecture, and award-winning wineries. Explore Mission Estate, the birthplace of New Zealand wine, or tour vineyards for a deeper dive into its winemaking legacy. Fans of the 1930s can enjoy a Vintage Car Tour, showcasing Napier’s architectural gems. Outdoor enthusiasts can cycle over 200km of scenic trails or unwind at pristine beaches like Ocean and Waimarama. Indulge your taste buds with local delights, from honey and chocolate to fresh orchard produce. The Hawkes Bay is also home to an abundance of wildlife, head out on a Gannet Safari or educate yourself at the National Aquarium of New Zealand.

Art Deco Trust Vintage Car Tour

Discover Napier's Art Deco heritage in style in a luxurious 1930s vintage car. Your journey will take in Napier's famous Art Deco Quarter, historic Port Ahuriri and a delightfully quaint Art Deco residential suburb.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Rosewood Cape Kidnappers Golf Course

Designed by legendary golf architect Tom Doak, the Rosewood Cape Kidnappers par 71 golf course measures 7,119 yards (6,510 meters) and will challenge golfers of all skill levels. Completed in 2004, our spectacular New Zealand golf course has been hailed as one of the great modern marvels in golf. Built on a ridge-and-valley landscape and with stunning sea views, Rosewood Cape Kidnappers Golf Course plays high above the ocean atop dramatic cliffs.
With cliff-edge fairways perched 140 metres above sea level and with a surface that remains firm and fast, this course offers holes unlike anything you find elsewhere in the world. While every hole has a spectacular view of the Bay, some play cautiously alongside deep ravines as others intimidate golfers with deep cliff top bunkers and sheer drops off the very edge of the earth. The golf complex includes a world-class practice range, putting and chipping greens, a well-stocked golf shop, clubhouse and ladies’ and mens’ locker rooms. Premium ladies’ and mens’ rental clubs are available.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Cape Coast Winery Tour with Takaro Trails

Cycle one of Hawke’s Bay’s most scenic coastal trails, visiting some of the region’s best wineries along the way. Starting in Clifton near Cape Kidnappers, you’ll enjoy ocean views, riverside trails, charming coastal villages, and tastings at renowned wineries such as Clearview Estate, Elephant Hill, Askerne, Te Mata Estate, and Black Barn. Take time for a relaxed lunch at a vineyard or café, then finish your day with a return shuttle to Napier. Includes e-bike hire, helmet, pannier, maps, and start/end shuttles. Wine tasting costs extra.

Your accommodation: Craggy Range

Set directly among the vines at Craggy Range’s Giants Winery, these two-bedroom cottages look toward the open pastures of the Tukituki River valley. Light-filled spaces and private terraces open to vineyard rows beneath Te Mata Peak. With en-suite bedrooms and a generous kitchen, each cottage offers an effortless base for estate dining and exploring Hawke’s Bay wine country.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 6



Napier to Wellington City via Masterton

The rolling countryside of the Hawke's Bay leads you into some of New Zealand’s richest farmland, located around the Manawatu region. Passing along the Manawatu Gorge the Wairarapa welcomes you. Masterton is home to the golden shears sheep shearing competition while just further south Greytown boasts the largest concentration of historic wooden buildings in the country.
Nearby Martinborough is home to dozens of boutique wineries. The route takes you over the Remutaka Range and along the magnificent natural harbour that the capital city of Wellington sits upon.

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: InterContinental Wellington

Set between Wellington’s active waterfront and central precinct, this hotel pairs tailored city hospitality with harbour views. Contemporary, light-filled rooms offer a calm, composed sanctuary within the urban core. Home to three dining venues, including Chameleon, it sits steps from Te Papa and waterfront promenades, serving as an effortless urban anchor.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 7





Explore Wellington

Wellington, known in Māori as Te Upoko o te Ika a Maui ("The Head of the Fish of Maui") or Te Whanganui a Tara ("The Great Harbour of Tara"), is New Zealand’s vibrant capital. Often called a ‘mini-Melbourne,’ this cosmopolitan city blends art, culture, food, and fashion with quirky laneway bars, hip eateries, and underground art shows. Stroll the waterfront to Te Papa, New Zealand’s national museum, or ride the historic cable car from Lambton Quay for stunning city views. Explore Cuba Street’s unique boutiques and visit the iconic ‘Beehive’ at Parliament. Fans of The Lord of the Rings can tour Weta Workshop, the Oscar-winning design studio behind Middle-earth. Just an hour away, Martinborough offers a culinary escape with top-notch food and wine. Nature lovers can’t miss Zealandia, the world’s first fully fenced eco-sanctuary. End your day sampling Wellington’s renowned dining scene—search 'Metro Eats' for the city’s best spots.

Taste Buds for Foodies Private Tour with Capital Personalised Tour - Lunch Included

The name says it all - if you're a foodie (well, aren't we all?) this is the tour for you. Discover locally-made treats and secret spots in Petone and Wellington. Price will include lunch with refreshments plus tasting fees.

Your accommodation: InterContinental Wellington

Set between Wellington’s active waterfront and central precinct, this hotel pairs tailored city hospitality with harbour views. Contemporary, light-filled rooms offer a calm, composed sanctuary within the urban core. Home to three dining venues, including Chameleon, it sits steps from Te Papa and waterfront promenades, serving as an effortless urban anchor.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 8





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:	8
Accomodation:	Luxury Lodges
Car/transport type:	

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Park Hyatt Auckland
Day 2	Solitaire Lodge
Day 3	Solitaire Lodge
Day 4	Craggy Range
Day 5	Craggy Range
Day 6	InterContinental Wellington
Day 7	InterContinental Wellington