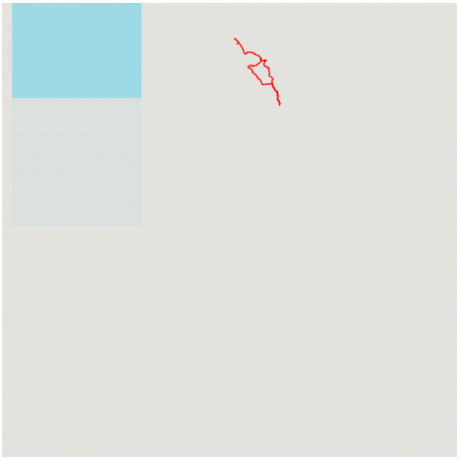
Australian Escapes Holiday & Travel Club
1800 669 579
australianescapes.com.au

The Winterless North

Explore the tropical Bay of Islands, the fascinating Cape of Reinga, and the magnificent giant Kauri trees of the Waipoua Forest. The winterless north is the perfect year-round destination. Along the way, you'll stay at charming boutique lodges where you can relax in style after each day's adventure.

Starts in:	Auckland
Finishes in:	Auckland
Length:	7days / 6nights
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.

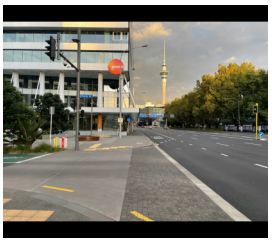


Inclusions:

Includes: Late model rental cars
Includes: Fully inclusive rental car insurance (excess may apply)
Includes: Unlimited kms
Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring
Included activity: Private Transfer Auckland Airport to your Auckland Accommodation with Tourcorp
Included activity: Electronic Travel Guide and In-Country Support App
Included activity: The Visitor Promise - Cultural Learning Course
Included activity: Waitangi Treaty Grounds Guided Tour and Cultural Performance
6 breakfasts

Day 1




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.

Welcome to Auckland

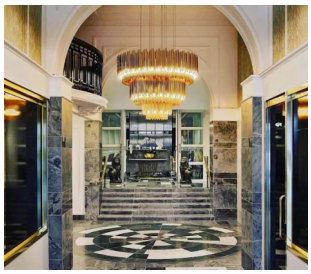
Welcome to Auckland, known in Māori as Tāmaki Makaurau. Auckland is New Zealand's vibrant "City of Sails," and the country's largest metropolitan area. Nestled between the Pacific Ocean and the Tasman Sea. Surrounded by native bush, lush rainforests, and pristine beaches, Auckland is a haven for both 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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Dinner at the Sky Tower Orbit Restaurant

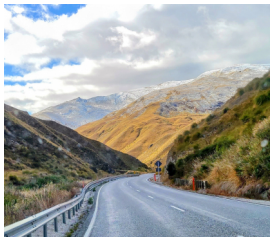
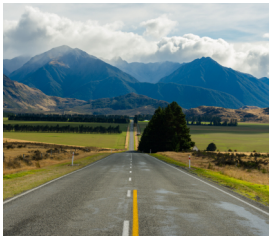
Soaring high above Auckland you'll discover Orbit, a truly iconic New Zealand brasserie offering diners sensational views - and food to match. Situated at the top of Auckland's Sky Tower, the dining room rotates once every hour, providing a truly unique experience with amazing 360-degree panoramas of the city, the Hauraki Gulf and beyond. Orbit offers a modern dining experience in a relaxed, open atmosphere with a delicious kiwi-inspired a la carte menu that features the best local and seasonal produce. As New Zealand's only rotating restaurant offering 360-degree views, it's an unforgettable experience that never ceases to delight.

Your accommodation: Fable Auckland

Located right on Queen Street the Fable Auckland is boutique and stylish property with an ideal location to enjoy and explore the vibrant heart of the 'City of Sails'.



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 Russell

The drive from Auckland to the Bay of Islands normally takes around three and a half hours, but plan to take a little longer for there are many things to see along the way. Stretch your legs in Puhoi, New Zealand's only Bohemian settlement. Go through Warkworth, and Whangarei and see the world famous hundertwasser toilets in Kawakawa. Arriving into Russell via the Opua Ferry, you'll be greeted by lush bush-clad hillsides dropping to golden sandy beaches.

Explore Russell

Experience the timeless charm of Russell, a historic village accessible by a quick ferry ride from Paihia or a scenic coastal drive. Once a notorious whaling hub, New Zealand's first European settlement, and briefly the country's first capital, Russell now offers a tranquil escape with a rich past. You'll love exploring historical sites like the bullet-scarred Christ Church, New Zealand's oldest church, or the historic Marlborough Hotel, which holds the country’s oldest liquor license. For breathtaking views of the Bay and its islands, a short walk up Flagstaff Hill is a must. This historic site tells the story of Māori chief Hone Heke's famous protests. Russell is the perfect place to step back in time while enjoying the stunning beauty of the Bay of Islands

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Your accommodation: Duke of Marlborough Hotel, Russell



The historic Duke of Marlborough Hotel is located on the waterfront in the charming village of Russell. Choose from a range of rooms including the Waterfront rooms with their spectacular views across to Paihia or the family rooms for those needing extra space. The onsite restaurant and bar is also a great place to relax and take in the views.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 3



Explore Bay of Islands

Commonly known as the ‘winterless north’ New Zealand’s Bay of Islands is made up of over 140 subtropical atolls. Renowned for its untouched beaches, abundant marine life, and idyllic climate, this tropical paradise ticks all the boxes. Spend some time on a remote stretch of beach, or see the dolphins on an ocean safari. If diving is your thing, take the morning to descend the Rainbow Warrior - The Greenpeace flagship sunk by French saboteurs in 1985. Wander around Russell, a whaling port founded in 1843. Learn about our culture in historic Waitangi, the site where The Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 between the Māori and Europeans. Alternatively, you may like to take a day tour to Cape Reinga, the very top of the North Island.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Hole in the Rock Cruise with Fullers

Board your cruise and take in the stunning views as you glide out through the islands and along the Rakaumangamanga Peninsula to Cape Brett, where a historic lighthouse keeps watch over and Piercy Island/Motukōkako, or as it is popularly known as the Hole in the Rock. According to Māori legend, local warriors used to paddle through the Hole in the Rock in their canoes before departing for battle. Drops of water from the cave roof above were a good omen. If conditions permit, your skipper will expertly guide the ship through the narrow space. Keep an eye out for common and bottlenose dolphins, whales, and other marine life during your cruise, and have your camera ready as you get up close to the action. Stop off at Otehei Bay on Urupukapuka Island where you have time to relax, take a walk, have a swim, or enjoy a bite to eat and drink from the on-site fully licensed café.

Your accommodation: Duke of Marlborough Hotel, Russell



The historic Duke of Marlborough Hotel is located on the waterfront in the charming village of Russell. Choose from a range of rooms including the Waterfront rooms with their spectacular views across to Paihia or the family rooms for those needing extra space. The onsite restaurant and bar is also a great place to relax and take in the views.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 4







Russell to Paihia via Opua Ferry

Enjoy a scenic journey from historic Russell across the tranquil waters of the Bay of Islands. Enjoy a short, scenic crossing between Ōkiato and Opua. Tickets are paid on board using EFTPOS or credit card, no booking needed. Once in Opua, continue the quick drive into Paihia, your gateway to golden beaches, ocean adventures, and vibrant waterfront dining.

Paihia, Bay of Islands

Paihia, an oceanside gem, played a pivotal role in Aotearoa-New Zealand's history. A visit to the Waitangi Treaty Grounds offers a profound look into the signing of the Waitangi Treaty, where 43 Māori chiefs and 39 Crown representatives shaped the nation’s future. Beyond its rich history, Paihia is a haven for water-based activities. From sailing through the Hole in the Rock and dolphin spotting to kayaking or fishing, or perhaps a day relaxing on the beach, this picturesque coastal town is the perfect base to explore the stunning Bay of Islands.

Waitangi Treaty Grounds Guided Tour and Cultural Performance

Waitangi is one of New Zealand's most historic sites where the Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 between the Māori and the British Government. This two day pass allows you access to the Treaty of Waitangi Grounds and includes admission to the Te Kōngahu Museum and Te Rau Aroha Museum and a Maori Cultural performance. During your guided tour, learn about the history of the treaty and discover the stories and events that shaped New Zealand. The cultural performance inside the carved meeting house includes waiata (singing), poi and the haka - a war dance Aotearoa-New Zealand is well known for.

Paihia, Bay of Islands to Kerikeri

Take the short drive north to Kerikeri. Kerikeri was one of the first settled areas of New Zealand and the Stone Store and Kemp House, two of New Zealand's oldest buildings still stand and are open to visitors. Kerikeri is the fruit basket of the north and also home to crafts people and producers of artisan food produce, so the farmers market and craft markets are great places to explore. There are also numerous green spaces and forests to wander through, including two 'Gardens of National Significance': Palmco and Wharepuke Gardens which are open daily and fabulous examples of sub-tropical gardens.

Kemp House

Kemp House also known as Kerikeri Mission House is New Zealand's oldest European building. Built by the London-based Church Missionary Society in 1821 to 1822 with the help of local Maori, it was situated under Ngapuhi Pa and was under the protection of the local tribal chief Hongi Hika. The 2 storey Georgian designed building was built primarily from Kauri. You can visit Kemp House on guided tours, highlights include the garden which has been cultivated since 1820 and is in a similar style to the original garden, as well as furnishings and personal wares from the last missionary family to live here, James Kemp and his wife Charlotte, who went on to purchase Kemp House after the missionary closed and ran a Kauri gum business out of the historic Stone Store. Guided tours operate daily 10am - 5pm Nov - April and 10am - 4pm May - Oct. Closed Christmas Day. Pay on entry and for more information visit The New Zealand Historic Places Trust.

Your accommodation: Moon Gate Villa

Luxury bed & breakfast accommodation nestled among elegant, sub-tropical gardens. It is situated 2-minute drive from Kerikeri village; a short stroll to local markets; and close to local restaurants, wineries, galleries, and craft shops.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 5





Kerikeri to Cape Reinga and Back

Today, you will visit the northernmost point of the country, the spiritually significant Cape Reinga. Highlights of this day trip include a visit to 90 Mile Beach, dune surfing, and seeing the clashing of two oceans! Sample some of the best fish and chips available on your way back to Kerikeri.

Ninety Mile Beach

Situated on the west coast of Northland, Ninety Mile Beach runs from Ahipara in the south to near Cape Reinga at the northern tip of New Zealand. Interestingly, it's accurate length is about 30 miles shorter than its name would have us believe.
At low tide 4WD vehicles can drive the length of the beach with many access points along the coastline. At the northern end the Te Paki stream is the most popular access point.

Cape Reinga

Cape Reinga, at the northwestern tip of the Aupouri Peninsula, is often mistaken for New Zealand’s northernmost point, but that title belongs to Surville Cliffs, 30 km to the east. Here, the Pacific Ocean and Tasman Sea meet, creating dramatic tides. The Cape's lighthouse, built in 1941 and automated in 1987, stands as a beacon of this iconic location. In Māori mythology, Cape Reinga, or Te Rerenga Wairua, is the "leaping off place of spirits" on their journey to Hawaiiki. Nearby Tapotupoto Bay and Spirits Bay offer beautiful beaches and are ideal for short rest stops or exploring more of the area's cultural significance.

Your accommodation: Moon Gate Villa

Luxury bed & breakfast accommodation nestled among elegant, sub-tropical gardens. It is situated 2-minute drive from Kerikeri village; a short stroll to local markets; and close to local restaurants, wineries, galleries, and craft shops.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 6




Kerikeri to Waipoua Forest

Heading west from Kerikeri you leave the Bay of Islands behind and soon and travel through rural Northland before arriving into the Hokianga and the wilder seas of the Tasman. The small townships of Omapere and Opononi have a great seaside feel and the perfect place to stop for an ice cream. The route now heads south and into the Waipoua Forest, home to the massive Kauri trees. Make sure you allow time to take one of the short walks that are signposted as you pass through the forest. Not to be missed is the 5 minute loop to view the largest of all the trees Tane Mahuta.

Kauri Coast

The Kauri Coast, stretching from Kaiwaka to Waipoua Forest, offers a journey through dramatic landscapes and rich history in the Kaipara District. Begin at Kaiwaka, the "little town of lights," before exploring rural settlements like Paparoa and the tranquil Pahi.
Further north, the renowned Kauri Museum at Matakohe tells the story of the region's past. For the adventurous, Tokatoka Peak and Maungaraho Rock offer rewarding climbs with spectacular views.
The heart of the region is Dargaville, the "Kumara Capital." This historic town, nestled beside the Northern Wairoa River, is a hub for history, events, and unique crafts. Just a short drive away is Ripiro Beach, a magnificent 100km stretch of sand perfect for 4WD adventures and exploring shipwreck history at Pouto Point.
For a swim, the pristine Kai Iwi Lakes are a favorite holiday spot. Continuing north, you'll discover stunning swamp kauri exhibits before entering the ancient Waipoua Forest. Here, stand in awe of Tāne Mahuta, the world's largest kauri tree, and explore a network of walks through this magnificent, 2000-year-old forest. The Kauri Coast is a true outdoor and historical retreat

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SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Twilight Waipoua Encounter

Experience the Waipoua Forest at night on this spectacular 4 hour tour. Learn about the rich birdlife and fauna that inhabit the forest, including the carnivorous kauri snail. You'll also get to experience the deep spiritual respect the Maori people have for this place. Your Maori guide will brief you on the protocols for your visit and you once formal greetings have been made you will be allowed to meet the giant Tane Mahuta, or Lord of the Forest - the oldest Kauri tree in the world.

Your accommodation: Waipoua Lodge

Waipoua Lodge is nestled on a ridge overlooking the mighty Waipoua Forest. Experience authentic New Zealand luxury hospitality in a breathtaking ancient and natural environment. Please contact the property a day or two before your arrival to discuss menu preferences.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 7



Waipoua Forest to Auckland

Heading back across country the Matakohe Kauri Museum is an award winning museum and has extensive displays of the regions logging, farming and social history. Just a short drive from Warkworth towards the coast is the small township of Matakana and a little further you will find the often deserted beaches of the Tawharanui Marine Reserve.
The final leg of the journey takes you back along State Highway 1 and the North Shore suburbs before crossing the Auckland Harbour Bridge and into the city.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Matakohe Kauri Museum

The Kauri Museum is located approximately 90 minutes drive north of Auckland, in the rural backdrop of Matakohe. Offering insight into the region's pioneering history, It charts the rise and fall of the great Kauri forests with stunning displays and detailed exhibitions including: The largest collection of Kauri Gum in the world, a fully furnished 1900's era Kauri house, the largest collection of Kauri furniture in the world, a huge 22 metre long Kauri slab and a magnificent collection of original photographs and pioneering memorabilia.

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	North Island Self Drive
Starts:	Auckland
Finishes:	Auckland
Tour length:	7
Accomodation:	Boutique Lodges & Hotels
Car/transport type:	

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Fable Auckland
Day 2	Duke of Marlborough Hotel, Russell
Day 3	Duke of Marlborough Hotel, Russell
Day 4	Moon Gate Villa
Day 5	Moon Gate Villa
Day 6	Waipoua Lodge