



MIDDLE EARTH: HOBBIT & LORD OF THE RINGS TOUR

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PRICE ON REQUEST

Day 1 ARRIVE AUCKLAND

Welcome to New Zealand! You will be met on arrival at Auckland International Airport before being transferred to your hotel. Tonight, a welcome dinner is served at the hotel.

Day 2 AUCKLAND / WAITOMO CAVES / HOBBITON / ROTORUA

Depart Auckland and travel south crossing the Bombay Hills through the dairy rich Waikato countryside to the famous Waitomo Caves. Here, take a guided tour through the amazing limestone caves and into the magical Glowworm Grotto – lit by millions of glow-worms. From Waitomo, travel to Matamata to experience the real Middle-Earth with a visit to the Hobbiton Movie Set. During the tour, your guide will escort you through the ten-acre site recounting fascinating details of how the Hobbiton set was created. Hear stories from filming as you view the Hobbit holes, Green Dragon Inn, Mill and other structures. The tour includes a walk up Bagshot Row to Bag End, to stand outside the most famous Hobbit hole in Middle-Earth. Following your tour, dinner is served at the 'Green Dragon' pub. The Green Dragon featured in The Lord of the Rings film trilogy as the local meeting place for all the residents of Hobbiton.

** Note - for dinner to be included at Hobbiton, you must visit on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Sunday.

Following dinner drive onto the thermal wonderland of Rotorua.

Day 3 ROTORUA / TAUPO / ROTORUA

Travel south to Taupo to the Aratiatia Rapids where cast and crew spent one week shooting the flood scene that features in 'The Two Towers'. See Huka Falls and marvel as the mighty Waikato River thunders through the narrow canyon. Stop in the resort town of Taupo then retrace your journey back to Rotorua stopping en-route at Waitapu Thermal Wonderland, one of the world's most colourful thermal areas. See the Artist's Palette where different minerals form areas on the pool surface, and walk down alongside the silica terrace to see the Bridal Veil Falls. Tonight visit Tamaki Maori Village for a Cultural Experience & Hangi Dinner. Experience the warmth of the Maori people during an evening of ceremonial rituals, powerful cultural performance & hangi feasting.

Day 4 ROTORUA / PIOPIO / OHAKUNE

This morning head south to the settlement of PioPio (pronounced Pew Pew) home to the 'Trollshaw Forest' filming location in the movie 'The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey'. From here continue to Taumarunui then south to the Tongariro Volcanic Plateau. Here travel up Mount Ruapehu to the 'Top of the Bruce' then walk to Pinnacle Ridge where scenes of Mordor, Gorgoroth Plains, and the Eryn Muil were filmed before skirting the edges of Mount Ruapehu to Ohakune.

Day 5 OHAKUNE / WELLINGTON

Today drive to the Mangawhero Falls and the river bed where Smeagol chased and caught a fish, before heading south again across the Central Plateau and through the Manawatu Gorge to arrive at the garden of Fernside, the location of Lothlorien in Featherston. Continue south before arriving into New Zealand's capital city Wellington, which was home to many of the LOTR actors and crew during production.

Day 6 WELLINGTON

In central Wellington visit the summit of Mt Victoria (Outer Shire) and see the Embassy Theatre – home to the Australasian premieres of 'The Fellowship of the Ring' and 'The Two Towers' and world premiere of 'The Return of the King'. Head out to the Hutt Valley to Harcourt Park which became the Gardens of Isengard, nearby Hutt River where a portion was used to film Rivendell in 2000. Visit the Weta Cave where a short movie provides a behind-the-scenes look at Weta and includes interviews with Weta co-founders Peter Jackson & Richard Taylor to give insight into the creativity of Weta. In the mini-museum, come face to face with some of the characters, props and displays from your favourite movies. Time permitting, visit Te Papa – New Zealand's National Museum to learn about the shaping of its land, the spirit of its diverse peoples, its landscapes & distinctive popular culture.

Day 7 WELLINGTON / PELORUS BRIDGE / NELSON

Today commences with a cruise on board the Interislander Ferry across Wellington Harbour and Cook Strait and through the picturesque Marlborough Sounds into Picton. Board your coach and drive through to Pelorus Bridge for a walk through the Beech and Podocarp Forest as well as viewing the many sculptured boulder's in the Pelorus River. Upon arriving into Nelson there will be time to visit the original jeweller of the Ring; Jens Hansen Jewellers or take an optional helicopter flight to Mount Owen. As you fly toward Mt Owen, a landscape of glaciated marble karst is exposed and you appreciate the size of these giant rocks. This was the eastern exit from the mines of Moria from The Lord of the Rings.

Day 8 NELSON / METHVEN

Travel south through the Golden Downs Forest, to Murchison through the Maruia Forest over the Lewis Pass then into Hanmer Springs. Time out here for lunch in this lovely alpine village before joining the upper reaches of the Canterbury Plains to your accommodation at the foot of the Southern Alps mountain range.



Day 9 METHVEN / MT SUNDAY / TWIZEL

Head back into the Southern Alps mountain range to Mt Potts Station where conditions permitting, you can take a walk to Mt Sunday better known as Meduseld in Rohan in the Lord of the Rings. Travel back down to the Canterbury Plains before crossing Burkes Pass and arriving in Tekapo. See the magnificent blue waters of Lake Tekapo and see the Church of the Good Shepherd, then visit Braemar Station, a location from The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey.

Day 10 TWIZEL / POOLBURN / CROMWELL

This morning visit Ben Ohau Station which featured in the Battle of the Pelennor Fields and then visit the Poolburn Reservoir where the surrounding area was used to portray Rohan. Afterwards travel onto Tarras where scenes were filmed for the Great East Road, Flight to the Ford and the Misty Mountains. Your accommodation tonight is in Cromwell located on the shores of Lake Dunstan.

Day 11 CROMWELL/ ARROWTOWN / GLENORCHY / QUEENSTOWN

From Cromwell follow the rugged Kawarau Gorge Road and head into the historic gold mining township of Arrowtown, where the Ford of Bruinen was filmed. From here skirt the shores of Lake Wakatipu and head to Glenorchy with its backdrop of the Misty Mountains located at the head of Lake Wakatipu. The area was also used as a location in The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe. Return to Queenstown via the Twelve Mile Delta where filming of Ithilien took place. Tonight is free for you to explore the local restaurants, cafés and bars.

Day 12 QUEENSTOWN

Today is a day at leisure where you have the option to visit the numerous movie set locations in the area with independent tour operators. Recommended options include the Paradise Safari Mavora Lakes – Scenic Lord of the Rings Day Tour featuring Fangorn Forest, Amon Hen, Nen Hithoel (Sindarin 'Lake of Many Mists'), and the River Anduin. Also recommended are the Lord of the Rings & Glacier Explorer – Heli Flight or a half-day 4WD excursion with Nomad Safaris to discover backroad filming locations in the Wakatipu Basin.

Day 13 QUEENSTOWN – WANAKA

Today leave Queenstown and head across distinctive Central Otago landscapes to Wanaka. Drive to Glendhu Bay near Wanaka to see the backdrop for Gandalf's flight to Rohan. This pretty resort town set on the shores of Lake Wanaka is a popular vacation spot with New Zealander's and on a clear day there are splendid views across the lake to Mt Aspiring.

Day 14 WANAKA / FRANZ JOSEF

Ascend past glacial Lakes Wanaka and Hawea and cross the Southern Alps via the Haast Pass - the lowest of the mountain passes through the Southern Alps. Once over the Pass the scenery changes dramatically as you make your way to Haast. The journey north along the West Coast features native rainforest, wetlands, bush-fringed lakes, sand dunes and surf-pounded shingle beaches. Drive through the Fox township stopping en-route at the viewpoint to see the Fox Glacier set amidst native rainforest then continue north to Franz Josef village.

Day 15 FRANZ JOSEF / CHRISTCHURCH

Drive north along the West Coast to the town of Hokitika. Time permitting, visit a greenstone factory at Hokitika where a local jade like stone highly prized by pre-European Maori is crafted into exquisite jewellery. Head inland to the village of Arthurs Pass to board the Tranz Alpine train for a scenic rail journey through the heart of the mighty Southern Alps. Travel across towering viaducts, through spectacular gorges and river valleys then the landscapes opens up as you journey across the fertile Canterbury Plains and into Christchurch City.

Day 16 DEPART CHRISTCHURCH

Take a morning sightseeing tour of Christchurch including Hagley Park, the Christchurch Botanic Gardens and the River Avon. Learn about the effects of the 2011 earthquakes and how the city is rebuilding. The tour concludes at Christchurch International Airport with check in for your departure flight.

Important Note

The itinerary is just a guide and summarises our favourite places, sights and experiences. Any or all of them may be enjoyed as part of a tour.

Have a look at our recommendations, highlight places you wish to include and get in touch with us: together we can create a unique and unforgettable holiday experience.