

New Zealand Highlights

14 DAYS NORTH & SOUTH ISLANDS
FROM £1,989



If you're short on time and want to see as many of New Zealand's highlights as possible, then our suggestion is to take in Auckland and Rotorua on the North Island before flying to Queenstown, South Island to see the wonders of Fiordland. Return via the West Coast to Christchurch.

OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPERIENCE

- A ferry trip across Auckland's harbour to Devonport
- Taking a bungee jump off the Sky Tower for a unique view over Auckland!
- See the Victorian Bathhouse and stroll Rotorua's lakeside gardens
- Climbing over the Southern Alps on one of the world's most scenic train rides
- Riding an electric bike along Queenstown's traffic-free cycle paths
- Discovering Lake Wanaka's wildlife with an eco-expert and planting a tree
- Taking a helicopter flight onto a West Coast Glacier
- Learning about Hokitika's rip-roaring past as a gold-rush town
- Punting on the River Avon
- The amazing architecture of Christchurch's 'cardboard' Cathedral

- 1. Hokitika Gorge
- 2. Hobbiton™
- 3. Brown's Boutique Hotel
- 4. Mou Waho Island
- 5. Heli-hike Mount Cook

ITINERARY

Day 1 Haere Mai – Welcome!
We greet you at the airport and whisk you to your central hotel with restaurants and city sights on the doorstep. Stretch your legs on a stroll down to the harbour.

Day 2 Auckland
Exciting Auckland is a melting pot of cultures from Polynesian and European to Asian. It is surrounded by sea, extinct volcanoes and bush-clad ranges. Top tips for sightseeing are a stroll in Aotea Square, a trip up the Sky Tower and a ferry across the harbour. For an overview of the country's history and Maori culture, the Auckland Museum is excellent.

Day 3 Auckland to Matamata to Rotorua
Collect your hire car and head over the Bombay Hills through rolling farmland to Matamata. This rural community is now known by another name: *Hobbiton™*. If you haven't seen Peter Jackson's films, drive on to Rotorua, but *Lord of the Rings* fans have a treat in store on a guided visit to the original film location, complete with Bag End and the Party Tree.

Day 4 Rotorua
Rotorua forms part of the 'Pacific Rim of Fire' and thermal activity is everywhere! Easily accessible to the town are the bubbling mud pools and geyser at Te Puia; close by are other fascinating sites like the Buried Village, or the thermal spa at Hell's Gate. Rotorua is also home to Maori tribes and on a short trip like this, an evening of songs, legends and dance – including the famous haka – is a must. Enjoy a traditional Hangi feast cooked in the earth by 'free' geothermal heat. A memorable evening!

Day 5 Rotorua to Queenstown
Drop off your vehicle at Rotorua airport and board a flight to South Island. On arrival at Queenstown, pick up another car and start exploring! Surrounded by mountains and set on the shores of Lake Wakatipu, the beauty and energy of Queenstown offers something for every traveller. The resort offers sophisticated bars, good restaurants and shops: it is very much a year-round destination.

Day 6 Queenstown
Today is free for you to pack in as many activities as you wish! Perhaps a white-knuckle jet-boat ride, parasailing, a bungee jump or white-water rafting? There are 4WD tours into the wild, guided bush walks, cycle trails, horse-riding and wine-tasting. Take a gondola to Bob's Peak for panoramic views, or a trip on a vintage steamship. Whatever your interest, we can arrange most activities in advance.

Day 7 Queenstown to Te Anau to Milford to Te Anau
Follow the eastern shore of Lake Wakatipu through Southland countryside to Te Anau. Here, board a coach for a great day trip to Milford Sound. The route through Fiordland National Park is winding so let someone else drive! On arrival, board a cruiser to explore the steep-sided Sound, clad in dense rainforest, with cascading waterfalls. A picnic lunch is included and an expert guide explains the Sound's natural features.

Day 8 Te Anau – Wanaka
Return to Queenstown and choose your route to Wanaka. One option is through Cromwell's fruit orchards. The more challenging drive is New Zealand's highest road over the Crown Range. Wanaka is where New Zealanders holiday in summer, at the gateway to Mt Aspiring National Park. There are several excellent restaurants, from perennial favourite, Relishes, to the tapas at Kika (we recommend advance booking).



Day 9 Wanaka
A free day and night to draw breath! Relax on a lakeside stroll, linger in a café, then catch a film at Cinema Paradiso where the quirky seats include sofas and an adapted Morris Minor. Alternatively, take an eco boat trip to Mou Waho island in search of the flightless Buff Weka, or a self-guided walk in the Matukituki Valley. A guided 'via ferrata' climb, skydiving, canyoning, and – in season – skiing and snowboarding are more active options.

Day 10 Wanaka to Fox Glacier
Leave via Lake Hawea and take the Haast Pass through the Southern Alps to the Tasman Sea. Your West Coast journey reveals rainforest, bush-fringed lakes and surf-pounded beaches. On arrival, take a walk to the viewing platform to see the glacier's terminus.

Day 11 Fox Glacier to Hokitika
Weather permitting, there is time for a scenic flight: a helicopter ride over the glaciers reveals amazing features and views of Aoraki/Mt Cook. Longer flights can land on snow for an even more memorable experience!

Head north to Hokitika. This former gold-mining town is home to artists and craftspeople, and is a good place to buy authentic gifts, such as greenstone (called pounamu by the Maori).



Day 12 Hokitika to Greymouth to Christchurch
Drop your rental vehicle at Greymouth railway station in time to board the famous TranzAlpine train, which takes you up and over the Southern Alps on a line carved through the mountains by railway pioneers. The 4 ½ hour scenic journey features an 8-mile tunnel, sweeping bends and viaducts. On arrival, transfer by private car and driver from Christchurch Railway Station to your accommodation.

Day 13 Christchurch
Discover the city once described as 'the most English outside England' thanks to its gothic cathedral, colonial houses and punting on the River Avon. Now, after the earthquake, Christchurch is re-inventing itself with exciting new buildings, pop-up bars and ethnic restaurants. We recommend a guided walk with a local to understand the city's past, present and future.

Day 14 Depart New Zealand
Our driver and private vehicle transfers you to Christchurch airport for your homeward flight. We hope you will return for a longer adventure one day!

ACCOMMODATION

We arrange accommodation that balances quality with location and that we have seen for ourselves. We favour 4-star central hotels in Auckland and Christchurch, with a mix of independent hotels and charming B&Bs elsewhere. Should our preferred accommodation be unavailable, we reserve the right to book an alternative and adjust the tour price up or down accordingly.

If you prefer to stay at boutique hotels and unique lodges, please ask us to quote for a luxury version of this itinerary.

GUIDE PRICES	
LOW SEASON (May-Sep)	from £1,989
SHOULDER SEASON (Oct-mid Dec, Apr)	from £2,120
PEAK SEASON (mid Dec-Mar)	from £2,260
These prices EXCLUDE flights and stopovers, which start at £1,100 (see page 21). Single supplements apply: prices on request.	
Prices are per person based on two travelling/sharing including	
■ Meet & greet at Auckland airport	
■ Private transfer to your Auckland hotel	
■ 13 nights' accommodation in quality hotels and B&Bs	
■ Breakfast each day	
■ Intermediate car hire with unlimited kilometres & daily insurance	
■ Domestic flight Rotorua/Queenstown	
■ TranzAlpine rail service	