

Complete New Zealand

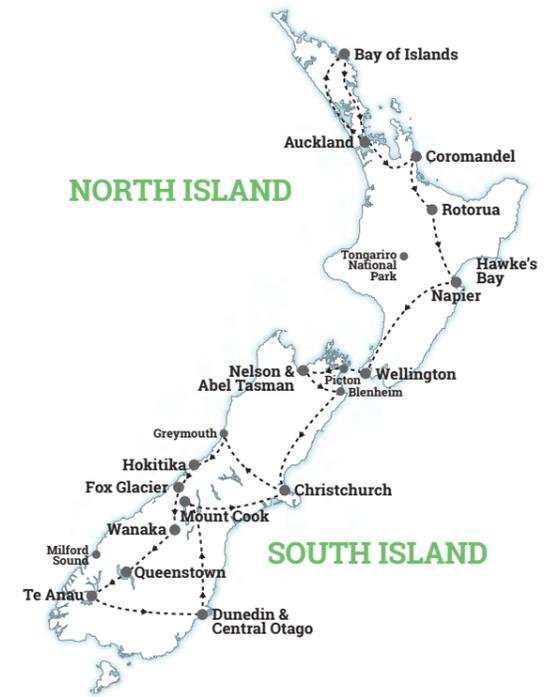
32 DAYS NORTH & SOUTH ISLANDS
FROM £4,049



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This is the ultimate independent itinerary stuffed with unforgettable scenic highlights and experiences such as overnighting on Milford Sound. Accommodation is in outstanding hotels and boutique B&Bs. Transport includes one of the world's great rail journeys, on the TranzAlpine train from Christchurch.

OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPERIENCE

Walking trails through Rotorua's spectacular Redwood Forest

A guided tour of Hawke's Bay wineries and sample some of the country's best chardonnays

Weta Workshop in Wellington to see *Lord of the Rings* props and costumes

Riding a horse along the sands at Punakaiki

Hiring an electric bike to explore the traffic-free path from Queenstown to Jacks Point

Panning for gold in the old mining settlement of Arrowtown

The evening silence and dawn breaking over Milford Sound on a special cruise

The natural hot pools at Hanmer Springs on a visit from Christchurch

ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrive Auckland

We greet your flight and take you to your hotel. Time to stretch the legs and orientate yourself.

Day 2 Auckland

Favourite views of the city are from the Sky Tower or, if you have no head for heights, take a harbour ferry to Devonport to see Auckland from the water.

Day 3 Auckland to Bay of Islands

Collect your rental vehicle and head north to discover native kauri trees in the Waipoua Forest, especially the 51-metre tall Tane Mahuta.

Day 4 Bay of Islands

You are spoilt for choice in Paihia: boat trips include a cruise to Cape Brett, while on dry land a guided tour of Russell reveals its rip-roaring past.

Day 5 Bay of Islands

At award-winning Waitangi Treaty Grounds learn how New Zealand was 'born' out of a treaty signed here between Maori tribes and British settlers.

Day 6 Bay of Islands to Coromandel

A journey of changing scenery, through Waikato farmland and beside the Firth of Thames, to the semi-tropical Coromandel Peninsula.

Day 7 Coromandel

Discover sub-tropical natural wonders: bubbling springs at Hot Water Beach and majestic rocks at Cathedral Cove.

Day 8 Coromandel to Rotorua

This geothermal wonderland is also a centre for Maori culture. Te Puia is a great introduction to the sights, sounds and smells of Rotorua!

Day 9 Rotorua

Take time out for a world-class spa visit, or explore the steaming Waimangu Volcanic Valley. For dinner, try a traditional Maori Hangi, cooked in the earth.

Day 10 Rotorua to Napier

Your route takes you south to vast Lake Taupo before heading to Hawke's Bay, and the Art Deco resort of Napier.

Day 11 Hawke's Bay

Ditch the car for the day and hire a bike to discover Hawke's Bay wineries with cellar-door tastings.

Day 12 Hawke's Bay to Wellington

The drive to Wellington takes you through the Wairarapa over Rimutaka Hill to arrive at New Zealand's capital.

Day 13 Wellington

This modern city is easy to explore on foot. Te Papa is one of many excellent museums, or you may prefer the great outdoors, taking a cable car to the Kelburn Lookout.

Day 14 Wellington to Picton to Nelson

Return your rental vehicle and take the Interislander Ferry across the Cook Strait to the South Island. Picton is where you pick up your rental, or ask us to book a coach to take you to the gateway of Abel Tasman National Park.

Day 15 Abel Tasman National Park

Board a coach, then hop on a local cruiser to explore this stunning coast, with options for shore trips and bush walks before returning to Nelson.

Day 16 Nelson to Christchurch

Depart Nelson for Christchurch, by car, coach/train from Blenheim. If driving, drop off your car on arrival.

Day 17 Christchurch to Greymouth to Hokitika

Board the TranzAlpine for one of the world's great rail journeys, over Arthur's Pass to Greymouth. Collect a rental car for the drive to the gold-mining town of Hokitika.

Day 18 Hokitika to Fox Glacier

The Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers are surprisingly accessible, on foot or by air. Scenic flights may even land on snow high above!

Day 19 Fox Glacier to Wanaka

Follow the Haast Pass into Mount Aspiring National Park to arrive at the lakeside resort of Wanaka.

Day 20 Wanaka

Follow an eco-guide in search of native wildlife like the flightless Buff Weka. This evening, enjoy a film at the town's Cinema Paradiso, with an eclectic choice of seats.



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Day 21 Wanaka

Take a hike! There are mountain and valley routes to suit all levels of fitness, or seek your thrills on a Matukituki River jet boat ride.

Day 22 Wanaka to Queenstown

A leisurely drive to Queenstown today: take the Skyline Gondola to Bob's Peak for a panoramic view over South Island's adventure capital.

Day 23 Queenstown

There are dozens of activities from bungee jumping to white-water rafting, or soak up the scenery from the deck of the *TSS Earnslaw* as she steams up Lake Wakatipu.

Day 24 Queenstown to Te Anau

Leaving Queenstown, follow the eastern shores of Lake Wakatipu and continue on through the lovely Southland countryside where sheep, cattle and deer farming predominate before reaching Te Anau.

Day 25 Te Anau to Milford Sound to Te Anau

Depart on a leisurely small group day excursion to Milford Sound travelling through the dramatic scenery of the Fiordland National Park. On arrival at Milford Sound enjoy a nature cruise by boat cruising past Mitre Peak and along the full length of the fiord with its cascading waterfalls, steep cliff faces and native rainforest to the Tasman Sea. On your return journey there is the option to enjoy a series of short guided walks with your local guide.



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Day 26 Te Anau to Dunedin

Drive through sheep country to Dunedin, founded by Scottish settlers. Its eclectic architectural heritage includes a flamboyant railway station.

Day 27 Otago Wildlife Excursions

Taiaroa Heads is the only mainland nesting site for Royal Albatross, while Little Blue Penguins nest on a beach nearby: together, they make a great day out.

Day 28 Dunedin to Mount Cook

Head north, taking the coast road to puzzle over the Moeraki Boulders before turning inland to Mount Cook National Park.

Day 29 Mount Cook

The Maori call Mount Cook Aoraki, 'the cloud piercer'. It is an inspiring sight, in any language.

Day 30 Mount Cook to Christchurch

Leaving the mountains, pause at the Church of the Good Shepherd for a stupendous view down Lake Tekapo, then cross the tussock plains to the 'Garden City' of Christchurch.

Day 31 Christchurch

We recommend a guided walking tour of this beautiful and brave city, reclaiming its place as South Island's premier city.

Day 32 Depart Christchurch

Return your rental vehicle at the airport depot and head for home, via Auckland.

ACCOMMODATION

We arrange accommodation that balances quality with location and that we have seen for ourselves. We favour 4-star central hotels in Auckland, Wellington 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 £4,049

SHOULDER SEASON (Oct-mid Dec, Apr) from £4,299

PEAK SEASON (mid Dec-Mar) from £4,599

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
- 31 nights' accommodation in quality hotels and B&Bs
- Breakfast each day and a Hangi dinner
- Intermediate car hire with unlimited kilometres & daily insurance
- Interislander Ferry travel as foot-passengers
- TranzAlpine rail tickets
- Milford Sound nature cruise
- Maori Hangi and cultural performance
- Abel Tasman cruise and walk
- Coach & boat trip Nelson/Abel Tasman National Park