

## Wellington - Auckland 7 Day North Island Tour

### Day 1: Wellington

Kia Ora and welcome to New Zealand!

Today we meet at 8am at the reception of Wellington YHA where your guide will have set up continental breakfast. Over breakfast your guide will introduce everyone to the group and run through everything you need to know to maximise your time in New Zealand. Breakfast and the welcome meeting should take around an hour though can take a bit longer with larger groups.

Tucked away at the bottom of the North Island, New Zealand's capital is anything but boring. A fun young city with tons of green spaces and beaches, it feels more like a small town than an urban capital. Packed with quirky bars, quaint cafes, beautiful street art and heaps of things to do, it's impossible not to love Wellington.

There is something for everyone here: be amazed at Weta Studios, where the Lord of the Rings movies were produced; ride the old fashioned cable car to the Botanic Gardens; visit Te Papa, Wellington's famous museum filled with peculiar things, interactive exhibits as well as the stories and legends behind the history of New Zealand; or explore the various beautiful beaches around town.

Join the group on a trip up Mt. Victoria, one of Wellington's most iconic spots. With the best views in town and plenty of walks and tracks to tackle, Mt. Vic is a Wellington icon and a highlight of the trip.

### Day 2: Wellington - Taupo

Today we head north to Taupo. It's a big drive today, but there's some unmissable scenery on offer. Lord of the Rings junkies - charge up those camera batteries, you're in for a treat. We will also pass through two of the North Island's quirkiest towns - as ever, your guide has a couple of surprises up his sleeve...

The Desert Road, as State Highway 1 is known in these parts, gives incredible views of three active volcanic peaks - Mount Tongariro, Mount Ngauruhoe, and Mount Ruapehu. You may know Mount Ngauruhoe as Mt Doom, so be sure to snap that all-important Mordor selfie.

The final part of our journey takes us through Tongariro National Park via the Rangipo Desert (bet you didn't know New Zealand had one of those!). Some of your favourite Lord of the Rings battle scenes were filmed right here, ladies and gentlemen.

Taupo is a beautiful lakeside town with a stunning mountain backdrop. Lake Taupo is New Zealand's largest lake - believe it or not, it's roughly the same size as Singapore! Enjoy the views and get ready for a full day here tomorrow, which can be as relaxed or adventurous as you please.

### Day 3: Taupo

Taupo is all about the thrills and spills, and there are plenty of options in store today. Get your hair wet with a water touch bungy jump, or take an unforgettable skydive for amazing lake and mountain views.

For many, the ultimate adventure on offer here is the hiking. The Tongariro Crossing, is among the top full-day walks in the world. This 19.4 km mountain trek boasts emerald green lakes, venting steam, lava flows and craters. You'll come back grinning from ear to ear before falling into bed and sleeping like a baby.

If you'd prefer to relax, jump on a boat for a sailing trip to view Maori rock carvings. Or head to Spa Park and soak until your fingers are wrinkly. However you choose to spend today we guarantee you won't forget it.

**Add-On Activities**

- Water Touch Bungy Jump
- Lake Taupo Sailing
- Skydive
- The Tongariro Crossing

**Day 4: Taupo - Rotorua**

After a free morning in Taupo for any last-minute skydives or bungy jumps, It's only a short drive to our next destination, Rotorua, and there's plenty to discover along the route. From mesmerising mud pools to the thundering rapids of the Huka Falls, your Haka Guide will make sure you don't miss a thing.

For thrills and spills along the way, we may stop to give you the chance to roll down lush green hills in a giant air-cushioned inflatable ball or mess up your hair with a hair-raising spin on one of New Zealand's fastest jet boats.

This evening is a major tour highlight for many - we are welcomed to a Maori village for an unmissable cultural performance featuring combat demonstrations, beautiful poi dance, and - of course - the breathtaking haka.

A traditional hangi meal, cooked in an earth oven, rounds off your evening and will fill your puku (belly) to bursting.

**Add-On Activities**

- Water Touch Bungy Jump
- Skydive
- OGO

**Day 5: Rotorua – Waitomo**

While the North Island is predominantly volcanic, Rotorua is exceptional for its geothermal activity. With neon blue and red lakes, steaming rivers, active volcanoes and geysers galore, there are more unique natural wonders to be found in Rotorua than many other places in the world.

You could start the day with optional white water rafting or sledging on the Kaituna River which includes a 7 metre waterfall, though if you prefer something more relaxed, there are plenty of other spots to explore around town, including some local hot springs if you want to take it easy.

Alternatively, you could choose an excursion to Matamata to tour the Hobbiton film set from *The Lord of the Rings*. Reenact scenes from the movies with your travel buddies or just pretend to be a Hobbit while sipping some of the pub's famous ginger beer.

Our next destination, Waitomo, is a distinctive limestone region where surface water and underground streams have dissolved the rock over tens of thousands of years, creating an amazing system of underground caves.

Have you ever been caving in a place with twinkling glowworms on the ceiling? Now's your chance!

Daredevils can opt to abseil 100 metres into the caverns on an epic 4-hour adventure. Or float along an underground river on a Cave Tubing trip as the glowworms light your way. If heights or wet feet are not your thing, ask your guide about the excellent and informative guided walking tours of the caves.

**Add-On Activities**

- Cave Tubing
- Glowworm Cave Tour
- Lost World Caving
- Hobbiton Movie Set Tour

- River Sledging
- White Water Rafting
- Forest Ziplining

## **Day 6: Waitomo – Coromandel**

This morning we say goodbye to the West Coast and hello to the East as we head for the beautiful Coromandel Peninsula. We'll walk together out along the cliffs down to Cathedral Cove (which you might recognize from the Chronicles of Narnia). Beautiful in its own right, with perfect beaches and massive rock arches and columns, it's one of the most popular spots in the Coromandel and for a good reason: It doesn't look real.

Alternatively you could take a guided kayak trip to Cathedral Cove to check out this stunning coastline from a different angle. Possibly accompanied by a dolphin or two.

The Coromandel is home to the famous Hot Water Beach - thousands visit each year to dig their own personal "hot tub" here. If the tide times allow us to visit today or tomorrow, grab your bucket and spade and get busy!

### **Add-On Activities**

- Cathedral Cove Kayaking

## **Day 7: Coromandel – Auckland**

Beautiful remote beaches, dense wooded forest and clear blue waters make the Coromandel one of New Zealand's favorite getaways.

You'll carve your own Kiwi pendant from bone here, a very special and unique Kiwi experience. What better souvenir to take home than one you made yourself in a traditional activity?

If time permits, at low tide, we'll make our way to the world-famous Hot Water Beach. When the tide's out, you can dig a hole in the sand where natural hot springs bubble up to create your own personal hot tub!

One of the most stunning drives in the North Island, the road twists and turns dramatically round the coastline and the landscape gradually changes all around you. Cameras at the ready - the views are magnificent.

We take the time to go this way to give you a taste of the more unique areas of the Coromandel that other tours don't go to.

We arrive in Auckland around 5 - 6pm, and this is where our tour comes to an end. You can always book extra accommodation for this night.