

Reisebine

21 Day North to South Auckland - Christchurch

Duration: 21 days / 20 nights

Departs: Tuesdays

Departure Location: Auckland

Finish Location: Christchurch

First Departure: 05/05/20

Last Departure: 29/09/20

Itinerary

DAY 1: Auckland to Hahei

Haere mai (welcome)! Your adventure kicks off in New Zealand's largest city, Auckland. We depart southbound for the Coromandel Peninsula via the old colonial town of Thames. We'll settle into our accommodation in Hahei. When the tides are just right, we'll head over to Hot Water Beach, where you can dig your own natural spa pool in the sand!

Accommodation included: Exclusive accommodation by the waterfront

Activities included: Hot Water Beach visit

DAY 2: Hahei

Today you have a full free day to embrace the laid-back Coromandel lifestyle. Get up early to catch the sunrise on the beach, then take a scenic coastal walk or opt to kayak to stunning Cathedral Cove. Another option is to take a guided boat tour through the cliffs and caves of the nearby marine reserve.

Accommodation included: Exclusive accommodation by the waterfront

Optional activities: Kayaking, guided boat tour

Free Activities: Walk to Cathedral Cove, sunrise on the beach

DAY 3: Hahei to Rotorua

We leave Hahei early, travelling through to Paeroa, home of New Zealand's oldest and largest soft drink company L&P, where we'll stop for a fun photo op at a local landmark. Carrying on, we'll arrive in Rotorua, known for its lively geothermal activity, rich Maori history and adventure tourism. Get the adrenaline pumping this afternoon and sign up for a white water rafting adventure, head to the adventure park, or take a walk around town.

Accommodation included: Comfortable central city Hostel

Optional Activities: White water rafting, adrenaline-fuelled adventure park (big swings, bungys and more)

Free Activities: Whakarewarewa Redwood Forest walk, see the bubbling mud pools at Kuirau Park

DAY 4: Rotorua

Often labelled the adventure capital of the North Island, you have a full free day in Rotorua to discover a wealth of adventure activities and geothermal wonders. Go ziplining through native bush, zorbing or take a truly unique guided jet boat adventure to bathe in a hot waterfall. Looking to relax instead? Visit the hots pools and bubbling mud baths at one of Rotorua's geothermal parks or take in a Maori cultural performance. Film buffs may want to sign up for a guided tour through the world-famous Hobbiton Movie Set. The choice is yours!

Accommodation included: Comfortable central city Hostel

Optional Activities: River jet tour, white water rafting, ziplining, zorbing, geothermal attractions, Maori village & performance experience, Hobbiton Movie Set tour

DAY 5: Rotorua to Lake Aniwhenua

There's time to squeeze in one last Rotorua activity this morning before we head further off the beaten track to the remote area of Lake Aniwhenua for an exclusive cultural experience like no other. Your Maori host family will share with you their story and traditions, as well as their vision for making a difference in their remote community. You'll see sacred Maori rock art, play traditional stick games for hand-eye coordination and watch the preparation of a ground cooked 'hangi', before tasting it for yourself! (D)

Accommodation included: Scenic lakefront lodge

Activities included: Kohutapu 'Strademark' Experience – guided tour of sacred Maori rock carvings, introduction to the Murupara area, delicious ground cooked hangi feast, dessert and continental breakfast

DAY 6: Lake Aniwhenua (via Taupo) to Blue Duck Station

After breakfast we depart and head to Taupo, where the brave hearted can opt to plunge from a plane to skydive over Australasia's largest lake! If you're not up for an adrenaline hit, walk the Huka Falls Walkway track, or spend time exploring this popular lakeside town. In the afternoon, we make our way to Blue Duck Station, an award-winning 7,200 acre high country farm that is both a working station and an environmental conservation leader. Settle in and spend the evening learning a little more about what makes this unique destination a top-rated stop. (B)

Accommodation included: Country station lodge

Optional activities: Skydiving

Free activities: Huka Falls Walkway track, enjoy your hosts' hospitality and stories on the local wildlife and history

DAY 7: Blue Duck Station

Today you have a free day to explore this truly amazing and secluded location in depth. The included 4WD farm tour will give you a tantalising taste of life in remote, rural New Zealand. There are plenty of other optional farming and conservation-based activities for you to experience around the property as well.

Accommodation included: Country station lodge

Activities included: 4WD eco-wilderness farm tour

Optional activities: Horse riding, clay pigeon shooting, pest hunting

Free Activities: Walk around the property, take in the lush scenery, Kaiwhakauka waterfall

DAY 8: Blue Duck Station (via Tongariro) to Raetihi

We depart at 6am and head to the active volcanoes of the nearby dual World Heritage Site of Tongariro National Park. Today you get a chance to do what is rated as one of the world's best one day walks: the Tongariro Alpine Crossing. Be prepared for some epic scenery as you walk across a rocky plateau with dramatic volcanic peaks, craters and turquoise lakes that you'll remember for a lifetime. Tonight, you can soothe your tired muscles from the big walk in the spa pool at your accommodation or relax with a celebratory drink by the fire.

Accommodation included: Historic residence with mountain views

Optional activities: Tongariro Alpine Crossing (subject to weather conditions)

Free activities: Taranaki Falls walk, visit the Volcanic Centre

DAY 9: Raetihi to Wellington

Today we head to Wellington, New Zealand's capital city, via Ohakune, Taihape and Bulls. You have the afternoon to cruise around the shops and cafes along popular Cuba Street, discover the New Zealand wonders on display in Te Papa Museum or stroll along the waterfront.

Accommodation included: Central city hostel

Free Activities: Walk Oriental Parade, head up Mt Victoria for fantastic views, visit Te Papa National Museum

DAY 10: Wellington to Marahau (Abel Tasman)

We catch an early Bluebridge Ferry across the Cook Strait to the South Island where you meet the bus in Picton. We will cruise through the famous Marlborough vineyard area and the coastal town of Nelson on our way to our amazing overnight stop of Marahau, right on the edge of the Abel Tasman National Park.

Accommodation included: Unique accommodation on the edge of the national park

Included: Ferry crossing from Wellington to Picton

Optional activities: Wine tasting

DAY 11: Marahau (Abel Tasman)

You have the entire day free to explore this stunning coastal national park renowned for its golden sand beaches. An Aqua Taxi ride is included in your tour, but you are welcome to upgrade to a sailing or kayaking adventure. Hike, sail, kayak or skydive – Abel Tasman National Park is gorgeous no matter which option you choose.

Accommodation included: Unique accommodation on the edge of the national park

Activities included: Walk part of the Abel Tasman track and catch an Aqua Taxi home.

Optional activities: Full day sailing trip, kayaking, skydiving, swim

DAY 12: Marahau (Abel Tasman) to Franz Josef

Buckle up for an awesome day driving down the incredibly scenic 'wild' West Coast, an area known for its untamed beaches and spectacular rainforest. We'll pass through Buller Gorge and down a stretch of road that was labelled one of the top ten drives in the world by Lonely Planet. We'll stop on our way down the coast to take a walk around the unique limestone rock formations known as the Punakaiki Pancake Rocks and their fantastic blowholes. Our next stop is the historic gold mining town of Greymouth to collect passengers connecting from Christchurch. From here we'll continue on via Hokitika, to the quaint township of Franz Josef, home to the famous Franz Josef Glacier.

Accommodation included: Lodge in the middle of the rainforest

Free activities: Buller Gorge, Pancake Rocks and blowholes, Hokitika greenstone store

DAY 13: Franz Josef

Depart early to take a walk along the shores of the amazing mirror-like Lake Matheson, and then travel through the mountainous Haast Pass and Makarora with plenty of photo stops along the way. We pass by the beautiful Lake Hawea on our way to arrive in Wanaka by late afternoon.

Accommodation included: Lodge in the middle of the rainforest

Optional activities: Guided glacier heli-hike, Glacier Valley Walk

Free activities: Any of the good bush walks in the area

DAY 14: Franz Josef to Wanaka

Depart early to take a walk along the shores of the amazing mirror-like Lake Matheson, and then travel through the mountainous Haast Pass and Makarora with plenty of photo stops along the way. We pass by the beautiful Lake Hawea on our way to arrive in Wanaka by late afternoon.

Accommodation included: Central hostel

Free activities: Lake Matheson walk, Ship Creek walk, Blue Pools walk, Thunder Creek Falls walk, explore Wanaka

DAY 15: Wanaka to Queenstown

This morning head out to cycle some of New Zealand's most beautiful bike paths along the lake before we depart Wanaka and cruise down to the famous original A.J. Hackett bungy site, where you can take the plunge - if you dare! Then, it's on to the 'Adventure Capital of the World!' Queenstown offers an optional big (make that huge) night out with a variety of excellent restaurants, pubs and live music.

Accommodation included: Central hostel

Activities included: Scenic bike ride around Lake Wanaka (suitable for all levels)

DAY 16: Queenstown - Day 1

With so much to see and do in and around Queenstown, you need three full days to take it all in! To get you started, a couple highlight activities are included in your package.

Today, you'll take an exhilarating jet boat ride amongst breathtaking scenery in the morning and then have the afternoon free for more Queenstown fun.

Accommodation included: Central hostel

Activities included: Jet boat ride

DAY 17: Queenstown - Day 2

Depart early on a day long trip to jaw dropping Doubtful Sound in stunning Fiordland National Park, where you'll take a three-hour wilderness cruise and learn more about this incredible natural wonder. You will return to Queenstown in the evening. Lunch is not included (sandwiches and snacks available for purchase on the day), so make sure you bring lunch, snacks and water.

Accommodation included: Central hostel

Activities included: Doubtful Sound day trip

DAY 18: Queenstown - Day 3

Make the most of your final free day doing any of the other incredible activities on offer or further exploring Queenstown. If you haven't already, we recommend riding the gondola or walking to the top of the hill for spectacular views of the town, lake and surrounding mountains.

Accommodation included: Central hostel

Optional activities: Any adventure activity that we mad Kiwis can dream up (bungy, swing, jetboating, skydiving, mountain biking, zipline, horse riding...), trip to Milford Sound

DAY 19: Queenstown – Day 4

Make the most of your final free day doing any of the other incredible activities on offer or further exploring Queenstown. If you haven't already, we recommend riding the gondola or walking to the top of the hill for spectacular views of the town, lake and surrounding mountains.

Accommodation included: Central hostel close to the action

Optional activities: Any adventure activity that we mad Kiwis can dream up (bungy, swing, jetboating, skydiving, mountain biking, zipline, horse riding...), trip to Milford Sound.

DAY 20: Queenstown to Aoraki/Mt Cook

Depart Queenstown early to drive over the Lindis Pass through the beautiful Mackenzie Country and past the vivid blue waters of Lake Pukaki. Then, we head north to our amazing overnight stop at the base of New Zealand's highest mountain Aoraki/Mt Cook, arriving in the early afternoon.

Accommodation included: Stunning alpine lodge

Optional activities: Visit the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre, scenic flights, 4WD Tasman Valley tour

Free activities: Take photos of awe-inspiring scenery, do one of the many great short walks to the Hooker Glacial Lake (weather dependent)

DAY 21: Mt Cook (via Tekapo) to Christchurch

Leaving Mt Cook, we make our way through a landscape made famous in the 'Lord of the Rings' films. We'll stop to admire the turquoise waters of Lake Tekapo and the Church of the Good Shepherd, a famous photo stop. Relax in the Tekapo hot pools, go snow tubing or ice skating (winter only) or hike up to the Mt John Observatory where you'll witness stunning views of the lake from above. After lunch, we will continue to our overnight stop in Christchurch, a city where old meets new, as the rebuild continues following the devastating 2011 earthquake. Spend your afternoon wandering the city streets and laneways to discover creative street art intended to bring cheer and colour to a city once buried in rubble.

Accommodation included: Central Christchurch Hostel

Optional activities: Tekapo Hot Springs, ice skating (April-Sept), snow tubing (June-Sept), stargazing (must hop off in Tekapo)

Free Activities: Visit Lake Tekapo, Church of the Good Shepherd, Mt John Observatory walk, explore Christchurch by foot, check out the Cardboard Cathedral and inner-city street art.

Notes:

- Standard accommodation is **dorm share** in hostels, cabins and lodges
- Upgrades to twin/double and private rooms are available subject to availability
- Room upgrades do not apply in Hahei
- Luggage is limited one backpack, bag or case per person with a maximum weight of 15kg plus a day pack
- Trips are not suited to children aged 6 years or under. 7 – 17 year old's may travel if accompanied by a parent or legal guardian
- A basic level of fitness is required for medium length walks

This itinerary is a guide. Given the spontaneous nature of our trips and lack of control over New Zealand's weather(!), what we do each day might occasionally vary.