

Self Drive Tour of New Zealand



Draft Itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)

Day 1

ARRIVE AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

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Arrive into Auckland, New Zealand's largest and most cosmopolitan city. After clearing customs and collecting your baggage, collect your rental vehicle and travel to your central city hotel. After time to freshen up, enjoy time in the "City of Sails", perhaps visiting the harbours and beaches, Kelly Tarlton's Underwater World and Antarctic Encounter or strolling the popular Viaduct Basin – NZ's Americas Cup yachting venue.



Evening: Auckland

AUCKLAND is affectionately known as "The City of Sails", having been built on a narrow isthmus between twin harbours Manukau and Waitemata. Sailing and swimming are common pastimes for Aucklanders, most of who live

within short distances of beaches. Employment and educational opportunities have attracted many Pacific Islanders to the city, giving it a multi-cultural air. An increasing number of Asian immigrants also flavour the ethnic mix.

Day 2

AUCKLAND - HAMILTON - ROTORUA

(B--)

Depart south and travel to the productive province of Waikato – sometimes called "the milk bowl of New Zealand" because of its predominance of dairy farms. Dairying is now our leading agricultural industry and principal driver of our export based economy. Perhaps break for lunch the pretty town of Cambridge before you travel to scenic lakeside Rotorua, an interesting geothermal region and home of native Maori culture.



Evening: Rotorua

ROTORUA The first thing that will hit you in Rotorua is the smell of sulphur that pervades the area. Give your nose a while to acclimatise then start to enjoy the delights of this thermal wonderland. Boiling mud pools, shooting geysers, steaming lakes, the home of Maori culture, bountiful fishing and nearby, the largest forest in New Zealand at Kaiangaroa.

Day 3

ROTORUA

(B-D)



Enjoy the day in and around Rotorua. Visit the Agrodome for an entertaining exhibition of New Zealand's sheep industry - as well as the static displays, there are demonstrations of shearing and dogs working sheep. Rams of each breed of sheep found in New Zealand are showcased. Also visit nearby Rainbow Springs where you can view our native flora and fauna. Te Puia Whakarewarewa provides an excellent chance to view the boiling mud pools and geysers and the model Maori village is well worth visiting for an insight into New Zealand's indigenous people. An enjoyable way to end the day is with the native Maori Hangi (feast) and concert - a great night's entertainment!

Evening: Rotorua

Day 4

ROTORUA - TAUPO - HAWKES BAY

(B-D)

Travel south via the vast Lake Taupo, New Zealand's largest lake. View the powerful Huka Falls before visiting the lakeside township of Taupo, a popular holiday destination for many. Continue east to

Hawkes Bay and the city of Napier, the “Art Deco” capital of New Zealand. Hawkes Bay is one of New Zealand’s premier wine and fruit growing regions and we recommend you visit a local vineyard to sample some of the wines for which the region is renowned. Later this afternoon, travel to a nearby sheep and beef farm and meet your hosts for the evening – a great chance to chat with farming colleagues and experience New Zealand’s rural way of life.

Evening: Hawkes Bay Farmstay (subject to availability)



HAWKES BAY is New Zealand’s largest producer of apples, pears and peaches and the third largest producer of grapes. It is famous for its world class wines and is renowned for its climate and appealing ‘way of life’. Traditional farming such as sheep, cattle, deer, dairy and forestry is carried out in the area, also intensive farming such as orchards, market gardening, viticulture and cropping.

Day 5 HAWKES BAY - WELLINGTON - PICTON (B--)

After breakfast with your farm hosts, depart Hawkes Bay and travel south via the Kapiti Coast to Wellington – our harbourside Capital City. Travel on to the Port of Wellington and depart by ferry to cruise across Cook Strait through the beautiful Marlborough Sounds to the South Island. Arrive at picturesque Picton and travel to your nearby accommodation for the evening.

Evening: Picton

Day 6 PICTON - BLENHEIM - KAIKOURA – NORTH CANTERBURY (B-D)

This morning drive to nearby Blenheim, in the heart of our premier wine region. Visit one of Marlborough’s wineries to sample some of the local wines, including the Sauvignon Blanc for which the region is famous. Next drive south along the spectacular Pacific Coastline to Kaikoura, a small town set in a spectacular position between the high peaks of the Kaikoura coastal mountain range and the deep waters of the Pacific Ocean. Kaikoura is home to whales, seals and other marine life that inhabit the ocean close to the shore.



Depart Kaikoura and travel south through the attractive farmland and vineyards of North Canterbury. Tonight enjoy a farmstay on a dairy farm

– an example of a dramatic conversion of a dryland sheep and beef property to a large scale dairy operation using innovative irrigation.

Evening: North Canterbury Farm Stay (subject to availability)

** alternatively, continue on to Christchurch, the largest city in the South Island.*

CHRISTCHURCH is the South Island’s largest city, situated on the level plains of Canterbury that attracted the original Church of England settlement and the great runholders. The city retains much of the English tradition that surrounds its creation. Some of the attractions of Christchurch are:

- The vibrant Arts Centre where local artists and craftspeople work and sell their wares;
- The Antarctic Centre, an impressive attraction near the Airport including live penguins;
- The Canterbury Museum offering a compact look at New Zealand’s Maori and British heritage and the nearby Art Gallery;



- *The Botanic Gardens - part of the huge Hagley Park the city forefathers had the foresight to retain as a tranquil green area in the middle of the city environs.*
- *Mt Cavendish Gondola, which ascends to a point on the Port Hills enabling views of both the Lyttelton Harbour and Canterbury Plains;*
- *Sumner beach and seaside village – a popular spot in the summer.*
- *The Willowbank and Orana Park wildlife centres.*
- *There is also good shopping in Christchurch, including duty free shopping and the family run department store, Ballantynes, in the inner city.*



Day 7 CHRISTCHURCH

(B--)

Today enjoy time in Christchurch, the “Garden City”, so called due to the many lovely private and public gardens the city has to offer. Perhaps visit the Port Hills for panoramic views of the Canterbury Plains, Southern Alps and Pacific Coastline, or the Arts Center and botanical gardens. Another option is a day trip to the picturesque seaside village of Akaroa on Banks Peninsula – a great place to enjoy a wildlife cruise on Akaroa Harbour, spotting marine life including the rare Hector’s dolphins.

Evening: Christchurch

Day 8

CHRISTCHURCH - DUNEDIN

(B--)

This morning depart across the Canterbury Plains, a patchwork of many farming enterprises including sheep, beef, dairying and cropping. Continue south along the Pacific Coastline through the seaside town of Timaru and on to the rural town of Oamaru, renowned for its attractive limestone buildings and nearby penguin colony that have made this coastline their home. Drive further south to see the large, round and curious Moeraki Boulders lining the sandy beach – a somewhat quirky freak of nature. Continue on to the city of Dunedin, known for its Scottish heritage and as home to thousands of university students attending Otago University, New Zealand’s oldest university.

Evening: Dunedin



Day 9 DUNEDIN - TE ANAU

(B--)

Depart Dunedin and travel through the productive rolling farmland of Southland with its range of livestock and cropping enterprises. Arrive at scenic Te Anau, set in a picturesque location beside a lake of the same name. This evening you may wish to travel by launch across the lake to the glowworm caves to see and hear about these fascinating creatures. Evening: Te Anau



Day 10 TE ANAU – MILFORD (option) – TE ANAU

(B--)

This morning you have the option (at your cost) to travel by tour coach to magnificent Milford Sound (Doubtful Sound also available) amidst the awesome mountain grandeur of New Zealand’s West Coast Fiordland region. Here, you can embark on a cruise where you will see steep mountains plunging into the Fiord,

spectacular waterfalls and an abundance of native rainforest flora, fauna and marine life. Return to Te Anau for the evening.

Evening: Te Anau

Day 11

TE ANAU - QUEENSTOWN

(B-D)

This morning travel through the scenic countryside to Central Otago, with its spectacular mountain and lake landscapes, fruit orchards, vineyards and Merino sheep stations. This afternoon explore Queenstown – there are many activities on offer such as a jet boat ride, a cruise on the historic steamer, the “Earnslaw – Lady of the Lake”, to Walter Peak Sheep Station, a round of golf, hiking, shopping or simply relaxing by the lake. This evening ride the gondola up Bob’s Peak to the Skyline Restaurant and enjoy dinner amongst the breathtaking lake and mountain beauty that surrounds you.



Evening: Queenstown

Day 12

QUEENSTOWN - HAWEA

(B-D)

Further time to explore the Queenstown region. Nearby you can visit the historic goldmining village of Arrowtown and the site where bungy jumping was born – a chance for daredevils to take the plunge 150 feet towards the Kawarau River attached only by a giant rubber band! Perhaps enjoy lunch at Gibbston Valley Winery where you can sample some of the Pinot Noir and other wines for which this region is highly regarded.

You may wish to spend another night in Queenstown or, alternatively, travel to nearby Lake Hawea and enjoy a farm stay on a large high country Merino sheep and cattle station for an insight into the management of this rugged country in a climatically harsh but beautiful environment.

Evening: Queenstown/Hawea Farmstay



Mount Cook, New Zealand's highest peak.

Evening: Twizel/Mt Cook

Day 13

QUEENSTOWN – MT COOK/TWIZEL

(B--)

Depart Queenstown, travelling through the spectacular Kawarau River Gorge and over the tussock-covered contours of the Lindis Pass to the Mackenzie Country. The region was named after Jock Mackenzie, a Scottish shepherd, who used this secret route to move sheep that he had stolen! Continue past the stunning aqua blue hydro lakes of Pukaki and Tekapo – the source of the majority of New Zealand’s electricity and also productive salmon farming. On a clear day there are wonderful vistas of our highest peak, Mount Cook Aoraki. If fine, visit



Day 14 MT COOK/TWIZEL - CHRISTCHURCH

(B--)

This morning depart the Mackenzie Country travelling over Burkes Pass through the rolling farmland of the Fairlie basin and onto the foothills town of Geraldine. Continue

north back via the Canterbury Plains to Christchurch for the evening.
Evening: Christchurch

Day 15 DEPART CHRISTCHURCH FOR HOME PORTS (B--)

Time for last minute shopping and packing then check out of accommodation, drop off car and connect with flights home.

