

Highlights of New Zealand - Cosmos Vacations

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[2025 Tour Details](#)[2026 Tour Details](#) »[2024 Tour Details](#) »

Your affordable New Zealand tour begins in Auckland with a two-night stay to start exploring this fascinating country. Enjoy a sightseeing tour of the city, including the Domain -- its park surrounding a dormant volcano. You'll travel through the lush farmland of Rotorua, home to New Zealand's Māori (indigenous Polynesian people) culture, bubbling geothermal sites, and the setting for The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit movies. You'll learn about the region's natural wonders, agricultural and creative traditions, and the Māori culture. Your value-minded New Zealand guided vacation continues with big sights to see throughout the north island. You'll travel past New Zealand's largest lake, Lake Taupo, and enjoy lunch at a local farm in Marton. Go sightseeing in the New Zealand capital of Wellington and take in its vibrant art and dining scene. See the Beehive and Parliament buildings, then take in the sweeping views of the harbor from Mount Victoria.

Embark on one of the world's most scenic ferry rides across the Marlborough Sound keeping an eye out for dolphins, penguins, or whales on your way to Christchurch. Explore the land of towering mountains, rugged coastlines, and vast plains of New Zealand's south island as you venture on to Queenstown. Enjoy free time to explore this "adventure capital" before your breathtaking cruise on Milford Sound. Here, be awed by waterfalls, sheer cliff walls, and tropical rainforests surrounding the marine home of seals, penguins, and dolphins. This budget-minded tour of New Zealand is nothing short of spectacular. Enjoy the idyllic and fantastic scenes around each turn in your escorted vacation from Auckland to Queenstown.

To know more about the visas for this vacation, [click here](#)



Tour Highlights

Meals

Breakfast daily, 2 Lunches, 1 Dinners

Itinerary

Day 1

ARRIVE AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND *Kia ora* and welcome to New Zealand! Hotel rooms are available for immediate check-in. A pre-night is not required for early check-in.

Day 2

AUCKLAND This morning begins with a welcome briefing to meet fellow passengers and your Tour Director. Then, enjoy a sightseeing tour, discovering firsthand why Auckland is regarded as one of the best places in the world to live. See the Domain, the city's oldest park, developed around an extinct volcano. Highlights also include charming Parnell Village, bustling Queens Street, and the Viaduct Harbour. The remainder of the day is at your leisure. Your Tour Director will have suggestions for additional sightseeing, shopping, and dining.

 Breakfast

Day 3

AUCKLAND–ROTORUA Leave Auckland this morning and journey through lush farmland to Rotorua, home to New Zealand's Māori culture and geothermal wonders. Our first stop is Te Puia where a guided tour allows you to see bubbling mud, pools of boiling water, and the famous Pohutu Geyser, the largest active geyser in the southern hemisphere. You'll also have a chance to witness traditional Māori carving and weaving along with a Māori cultural performance. Then, visit Agrodome to learn more about one of the country's major industries--sheep! This evening is at leisure.

 Breakfast

Day 4

ROTORUA Today is free to explore more of Rotorua. You may wish to take an optional excursion to visit magical Hobbiton, the set used as the Shire in the movie trilogies, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*. Other options include a zipline and canopy tour, helicopter and floatplane flights over the volcanic valley, or a relaxing soak in a natural hot spring at the Polynesian Spa. Indulge in an evening of singing, storytelling, and sizzling meats and veggies prepared on underground hot stones in true Māori fashion. Hang out with an optional Hangi dinner with a side of authentic cultural performances in the indigenous Polynesian tradition.

 Breakfast

Day 5

ROTORUA–LAKE TAUPO–MARTON–WELLINGTON Today, continue your journey on the North Island traveling past Lake Taupo, New Zealand’s largest lake. Stop in the historic town of Marton to visit a local farm for lunch. During your time here, tour a tour of the farm and learn about the importance of the sheep industry to the local economy. Continue to Wellington, New Zealand’s capital city known for its vibrant art scene, world-class restaurant culture, and active outdoor lifestyle.

 Breakfast  Lunch

Day 6

WELLINGTON This morning, a sightseeing tour includes the famous Beehive and Parliament building and panoramic views of the city and harbor from the top of Mount Victoria. The remainder of the day is yours to explore on your own.

 Breakfast

Day 7

WELLINGTON–INTERISLANDER FERRY–PICTON–CHRISTCHURCH Today, enjoy a special treat as you sail from Wellington to Picton and enjoy the spectacular Marlborough Sound on one of the most scenic ferry journeys in the world. Make sure to have your camera ready as dolphins are frequent traveling companions of the ferry. On occasion, you might even spot a pod of whales or some penguins swimming by. Continue to Christchurch, the largest city on the South Island for an overnight stay.

 Breakfast

Day 8

CHRISTCHURCH–LAKE TEKAPO–QUEENSTOWN Our journey continues across New Zealand’s South Island today. This is the land of towering mountains, rugged coastlines, and sweeping plains. Stop at beautiful Lake Tekapo for a visit to the picturesque Church of the Good Shepherd. Later, arrive in Queenstown, the “Adventure Capital,” for a 3-night stay. This evening you may want to take the Skyline Gondola to the top of Bob’s Peak, where you’ll enjoy breathtaking views of Queenstown and Lake Wakatipu below.

 Breakfast


Day 9

QUEENSTOWN A full free day to explore on your own. It's full steam ahead with an optional ride on the historic TSS Earnslaw Steamship to Walter Peak Farm for a delicious lunch or dinner. Browse your favorite boutique or art gallery, or take a heady helicopter ride over the Remarkables Mountains. Tonight, join your Tour Director and travel companions for a festive farewell dinner.

 Breakfast  Dinner

Day 10

QUEENSTOWN. EXCURSION TO MILFORD SOUND Today, enjoy a full-day excursion to breathtaking Milford Sound. Cruise to see cascading waterfalls, sheer cliff walls, tropical rainforest, wildlife including seals and dolphins, and fantastic scenery. It's sure to be a highlight of your trip! Return to Queenstown late this evening.

 Breakfast  Lunch

NOTE:

The excursion to Milford Sound may occur on Day 9, based on weather and road conditions.

Day 11

QUEENSTOWN Your vacation ends this morning. You may also choose to extend your time in Queenstown and explore more on your own. Extra nights are available for purchase.

 Breakfast

Tour Director

With Cosmos, there's no better way to get to know your destination than through the eyes of your Tour Director. Averaging over a decade... we'd like you to meet a Tour Director, who is representative of the type of expert that will be with you on your vacation.

MELISSA ROFF

Escorting tours for more than 15 years

" I feel very lucky to live here and privileged to share my home with visitors from around the world. We have such unique and pristine environments, it thrills me to see how people react to the wonderful and diverse landscapes as well as the activities and experiences that they can have here. Between Australia and New Zealand, we have it all. I love my job

and showcasing this remarkable part of the world, its culture, and history. It brings me great satisfaction knowing our guests return home with magical memories that we have helped create is its own reward."



TESSA CLARKE

Escorting tours for more than 20 years

" Kia Ora! I'm Tessa, and I've been guiding in New Zealand for some time. I can't wait for you to come and immerse yourself in my country. My goal is that when you go home, you leave with a deep understanding of what it is to be a Kiwi - and that you have discovered things not found in the guide books. Ka Kite Ano (see you soon)!"



JULIET HUDSON

Escorting tours for more than 15 years

" Passionate about sharing the best of what Australia and New Zealand has to offer and ensuring that each of our guests experience the trip of a lifetime is why I love being a Tour Director. I enjoy finding ways to showcase and immerse our guests in the destinations we visit, bringing the itinerary to life, and adding special touches with "meet the locals" experiences, morning "power walks," "local wine tastings," and "where to eat" menu boards. I love sharing my destination knowledge and helping guests, with beaming smiles on their faces, make wonderful holiday memories."



LEONIE BROOKS

Escorting tours for more than 20 years

" I have been guiding for over 20 years and have a passion for revealing the hidden delights of our country to those who are local or from overseas. These can be relation to our indigenous culture, our landscape and the people. There is so much to see and to learn about, but more importantly, it is the ability to stop and soak in what is happening around us that I enjoy most. There is something for everyone!"



IVY YANG

Escorting tours for more than 10 years

" Originally from Taiwan. I've called Australia home for 20 years. A certified Australian Tour Guide since 2012, a Tour Director since 2015, and an accredited Kakadu National Park and Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park tour guide since 2017. I have managed in excess of over 60 extended tours to destinations throughout Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. The most memorable parts of a journey are often those heartfelt moments we share with our guests, the unexpected adventures we encounter, the stories we hear, experience and learn along our journey, and the people we meet. The same itinerary could be done a thousand times but each will be unique in its own way."



Accommodation

AUCKLAND

QUEST AUCKLAND

Hotel as shown or similar

First-Class

Free Wifi

ROTORUA

SUDIMA HOTEL LAKE ROTORUA

Hotel as shown or similar

Superior Tourist-Class

Free Wifi

WELLINGTON

ATURA WELLINGTON

Hotel as shown or similar

Moderate First-Class

Free Wifi

CHRISTCHURCH

IBIS CHRISTCHURCH

Hotel as shown or similar

Superior Tourist-Class

Free Wifi

QUEENSTOWN

HEARTLAND HOTEL QUEENSTOWN

Hotel as shown or similar

First-Class

Free Wifi

Optional Excursions

Contact your Travel Consultant for more information.

Price Ranges

\$ (\$50 USD and under)

\$\$ (\$51 - \$100 USD)

\$\$\$ (\$101 - \$150 USD)

\$\$\$\$ (Over \$150)

* The "Starting at" or listed price is based on the lowest price available to book. Price is per passenger based on double occupancy and does not include airfare; additional fees/charges are not included. If a price is crossed out, the new price includes a limited time promotional offer(s) – please review current promotions or deals for additional information. Some tours require intra-vacation flights (and in some cases intra-vacation segments must be purchased from Cosmos).

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