

Auckland to Wellington Food & Wine Trail

This incredible self-drive tour invites you to experience the North Island's most renowned wineries, delectable gourmet hot spots, and stunning scenic locations. You'll have the freedom to explore at your own pace, enjoying personalised tastings and discovering hidden culinary delights. From picturesque vineyards to coastal vistas, every moment is crafted to provide a memorable and enriching holiday. Relax and immerse yourself in the beauty and flavours that make the North Island truly special.



Starts in: Auckland
 Finishes in: Wellington
 Length: 11 days / 10 nights
 Accommodation: Hotel 4 star
 Can be customised: Yes

This itinerary can be customised to suit you perfectly. We can add more days, remove days, change accommodations, mix it up, add activities to suit your interests or simply design and create something from scratch. Call us today to get your custom New Zealand itinerary underway.



Inclusions:

- Includes: Late model rental cars
- Includes: Unlimited kms
- Included activity: The Visitor Promise - Cultural Learning Course
- Included activity: Electronic Travel Guide and In-Country Support App
- Included activity: Harbour Sailing Dinner Cruise with Explore
- Included activity: Essence of Waiheke Wine Tour with Ananda
- Included activity: Hobbiton Movie Set Tour from Shires Rest
- Included activity: Martinborough in a Day Personal Wine Tour with Martinborough Wine Tours - Includes Lunch
- : 10 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 1 dinner
- Includes: Fully inclusive rental car insurance (excess may apply)
- Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring
- Included activity: Private Transfer Auckland Airport to your Auckland Accommodation with Tourcorp
- Included activity: Taste Buds for Foodies Private Tour with Capital Personalised Tour - Lunch Included
- Included activity: Fullers Ferry Auckland to Waiheke Island (Return)
- Included activity: Fullers Ferry Waiheke Island to Auckland
- Included activity: Hawkes Bay Wine and Dine Tour with Grape Escape - Lunch Included
- Included activity: Zealandia by Night Wildlife Sanctuary Tour

Day 1



Private Transfer Auckland Airport to your Auckland Accommodation with Tourcorp

You will be met at the Auckland airport by the driver and transferred to your Auckland accommodation.

Welcome to Auckland

Welcome to Auckland, known in Māori as Tāmaki Makaurau. Auckland is New Zealand's vibrant "City of Sails," and the country's largest metropolitan area. Nestled between the Pacific Ocean and the Tasman Sea. Surrounded by native bush, lush rainforests, and pristine beaches, Auckland is a haven for both adventurers and urban explorers. Wander through world-class museums and galleries in the city centre or enjoy a peaceful retreat at the Auckland Gardens, where stunning landscapes showcase New Zealand's diverse flora. Stroll along the lively waterfront to savour fresh seafood and international cuisine at Viaduct restaurants. For an unforgettable perspective, ascend the iconic SkyTower, New Zealand's tallest structure, and take in panoramic views of the city and its picturesque islands.

Your accommodation: Grand Millennium Auckland

Located in the heart of the city, a stay at Grand Millennium Auckland places you within walking distance of some of the city's finest dining, shopping and entertainment venues.



Day 2



Harbour Sailing Dinner Cruise with Explore

This unique on-water sailing and dining experience is not to be missed while you're in Auckland. Enjoy smooth sailing on the Waitemata Harbour - then watch this photogenic city come alive with twinkling lights. Enjoy your meal as you sail around the beautiful Auckland Harbour taking in the view as the sun slowly sets. You'll be treated to canapes and a drink as you set off towards Westhaven Marina. To finish the evening off, savour your dessert course as you leisurely sail back to Auckland's vibrant Viaduct Harbour.

Your accommodation: Grand Millennium Auckland

Located in the heart of the city, a stay at Grand Millennium Auckland places you within walking distance of some of the city's finest dining, shopping and entertainment venues.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 3



Fullers Ferry Auckland to Waiheke Island

Take a scenic approximately 45-minute cruise through the Hauraki Gulf between the Auckland down town ferry terminal and Matiatia Wharf on Waiheke Island.

Essence of Waiheke Wine Tour with Ananda

Known as 'New Zealand's Island of Wine', Waiheke has become home to a dedicated group of award-winning wine producers. With a unique micro-climate and the winemakers' philosophy of 'small is beautiful', Waiheke has produced some of New Zealand's most prestigious wines. Visit three of Waiheke's top vineyards and sample a range of their wines. Along the way enjoy a commented scenic drive, learning about the Island's history, geography, people, and culture from your knowledgeable local guide.

Fullers Ferry Waiheke Island to Auckland

Take a scenic approximately 45-minute cruise through the Hauraki Gulf between Matiatia Wharf on Waiheke Island and the Auckland downtown ferry terminal.

Your accommodation: Grand Millennium Auckland

Located in the heart of the city, a stay at Grand Millennium Auckland places you within walking distance of some of the city's finest dining, shopping and entertainment venues.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 4



Collect Rental Car

This tour's from price includes an intermediate-sized vehicle, setting you up for comfortable travels. Yet, we understand every adventure is unique! Feel free to select the perfect wheels from our incredible collection of rental cars, spanning from economy hatchbacks to premium SUVs.

Auckland to Hobbiton via Matamata

Head southbound on State Highway one through the lush farmland and dairy pastures of the Waikato region. The Bombay Hills mark the outer boundary of the greater Auckland area and its here you turn inland towards Matamata. This is the real Middle Earth, and you'll see many locations used in the filming of The Lord of The Rings and The Hobbit, as well as visiting the actual set of Hobbiton.

Hobbiton Movie Set Tour from Shires Rest

In the heart of New Zealand, you can step into the lush pastures of the Shire with a guided tour of Hobbiton, as featured in The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit Trilogies. Hobbiton is located just outside of Matamata in the heart of the lush Waikato farming region. Here you can visit such iconic Hobbit locations as Hobbit Holes, the Green Dragon Inn, the Mill and the Party Tree with a guide sharing behind-the-scenes tales and insight into the making of the films. Spend time wandering through Bagshot Row before being led inside a Hobbit Hole to view the detailed interior, designed to provide an authentic glimpse into the dwelling of a Hobbit.

Matamata to Rotorua

Just south of Matamata is the township of Tirau, home to the largest tin sheep and sheepdog, but it also offers a surprising number of bric-a-brac, art, craft, and antique stores if you feel like browsing.

Arriving into the City of Rotorua the region's geothermal activity becomes evident as you see steam rising from the roadside and surrounding hills.

Considered the cultural center for the Maori people, Rotorua is the ideal place to gain an insight into the history and culture. Nearby Ohinemutu Village is the original site of the first Maori settlers in the area and despite its modern surroundings and buildings, you can still gain a sense of what the original village was like. The magnificent meeting house and historic carvings along with the unique 'Tudor-style' St Faiths Church feature in many visitors' photo albums.

One of the most popular introductions to the Maori Culture is through an evening at Mitai Maori Village where you can enjoy performances and demonstrations followed by a traditionally cooked hangi meal.

Of course, Rotorua is also a great place to enjoy many other activities including, fishing, 4WD trips, relaxing spa treatments, mountain biking, walking, and hiking plus helicopter and float plane trips.

Rotorua

Discover the geothermal, adventure, and cultural wonderland of Rotorua. As you explore, you may see steam rising from cracks in the road, bubbling and hissing water in pools along the lake's edge, and the unmistakable smell of Sulfur. Rotorua is rich in Māori culture and history, with many Māori inhabitants recognising the great potential of the volcanic land. For an outdoor adventure, head to The Redwoods and experience the rainforest treetops from high up. There are a few accessible trails for disabled hikers and great biking trails as well. If you're lucky, you might spot some of New Zealand's native birds, such as the Pīwakawaka (Fantail) and the Tūī. Alternatively, enjoy the Lake Tikitapu Blue Lake Walk or explore Kuirau Park, where you'll find bubbling mud pools and steaming lakes. Don't miss the private thermal reserves such as Te Puia and Wai-O-Tapu, where you can walk among bubbling mud pools, spouting geysers, and Sulfur ponds. Just a few minutes from the town centre, the Agrodome and National Kiwi Hatchery offer an insight into nature. Rotorua's rich Māori culture is a must-see. Spend an evening with Te Pā Tū, complete with a traditional-style dinner or stroll along the lake edge to reach one of the country's oldest Māori villages at Ohinemutu. When hunger strikes, visit Eat Street in Rotorua CBD, a vibrant street lined with delicious eateries and restaurants to satisfy any craving. No visit to Rotorua would be complete without experiencing Rotorua's original tourist attraction - a relaxing spa treatment. This town boasts an array of wellness experiences to unwind in. Whether you are seeking adventure, culture, or relaxation, Rotorua offers an unforgettable experience.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Te Pā Tū Evening Māori Cultural Experience - Dinner Included

New Zealand's Most Awarded Cultural Attraction, presenting Te Pā Tū. Feast on song, drama, tradition, and divine seasonal kai (cuisine) within the forest Pā (village) blanketed by towering Tawa trees, blazing bonfires, and a forest-formed amphitheatre. Te Pā Tū shares Māori history, traditions, and cultural aspirations across 4-hours of celebration and feasting. These events change with each season of the Maramataka, the Māori lunar calendar.

Your accommodation: Millennium Hotel Rotorua

Millennium Hotel is Rotorua's largest 4-star deluxe hotel. Perfectly situated in the heart of the city overlooking Lake Rotorua. Five levels of accommodation offer guests a wide variety of scenic views.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 5



Rotorua to Napier via Taupō

This drive will take you through the thermal region just south of Rotorua. Home to a plethora of unique geothermal attractions including boiling mud pits, natural hot springs and steaming geysers, this area is a must do before you move on to Napier. Notable attractions are Wai-O-Tapu, Waimangu and Craters of the Moon. Continue on to Taupō and marvel at the lake, a giant crater formed following a volcanic eruption in the year 180 CE. As you approach the town, be sure to stop at Huka Falls to view the spectacular sight of hundreds of cubic metres of water spilling every second down the narrow 11 metre drop. For an extra thrill take a jet-boat ride at the base of the falls. Leaving Taupō, follow the road as it climbs the rugged Ahimanawa Range before descending back down the Pacific Coast to art deco coastal township of Napier.

Napier City

Napier, a coastal gem, is famed for its 1930s Art Deco architecture, the annual Art Deco Weekend, stately Norfolk pines, nearby wineries, and fresh local produce. With a Mediterranean climate and over 2,200 hours of sunshine annually, it boasts a thriving café culture set against stunning heritage buildings. The city center has around 30 cafés within walking distance, while Ahuriri, just beyond Bluff Hill, offers more upscale dining. Marine Parade overlooks the Pacific Ocean and Cape Kidnappers, home to the world's largest mainland gannet colony. Visitors can explore Ocean Spa, the Hawke's Bay Museum, and the National Aquarium of New Zealand. Bluff Hill, a key landmark, provides sweeping views of Napier, Perfume Point, Westshore Beach, and the busy Port of Napier, which exports timber, fruit, and meat worldwide.

In 1931, Napier was devastated by a 7.8-magnitude earthquake, New Zealand's worst natural disaster. Fires ravaged the city. Rebuilding efforts transformed Napier and Hastings into modern cities, while the uplifted Ahuriri Lagoon created much-needed land for expansion.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - National Kiwi Hatchery Experience

The National Kiwi Hatchery Experience is a special opportunity to gain insight into and view this highly regarded conservation centre. Developed with the visitor experience in mind, the hatchery boasts special viewing opportunities and is hosted by kiwi expert guides who ensure guests leave fully informed and all questions answered. Learn all about New Zealand's intriguing national icon and the efforts of the kiwi husbandry team, see and discover what it takes to hatch and rare chicks, and if you're lucky see baby chicks in person!

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Mount Tarawera & Orakei Korako Thermal Explorer by Floatplane with Volcanic Air

From above Mount Tarawera's impressive views include vast volcanic rifts, distant national parks, and our treasured lakes. Flying south on a floatplane, you will gain an appreciation of what local Maori refer to as the 'Sisters of Fire'. Here, volcanic activity has pierced the earth's surface across the fault line forming the reserves of Waimangu and Wai-O-Tapu which, when viewed from above, display a spectacular palette of nature's most vibrant colors. Landing at Orakei Korako, 'the Hidden Valley', is an amazing opportunity to experience hot springs, gushing geysers, and the natural beauty of this geothermal wonderland.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland

Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland is a spectacular showcase of New Zealand's colourful and unique geothermal elements sculpted by thousands of years of volcanic activity. You will be introduced to a diversely different natural landscape, extending over 18-sq. km. Enjoy viewing the volcanic features as you walk at your own pace along well-defined tracks. Relax in the first-class Visitor Centre, home to the Gift Shop and Cafe facilities. Visit the Mud Pool, the largest in New Zealand, it was originally the site of a large mud volcano which was destroyed through erosion in the 1920s. See the history and beauty of the Lady Knox Geyser at 10:15 am every day where a daily eruption happens of up to 20 metres.

Your accommodation: Art Deco Masonic Hotel

The Art Deco Masonic Hotel occupies a significant historic building on Napier's waterfront and has been richly refurbished in keeping with the Art Deco architecture. With its central location and decadent décor, this is the best place to experience what Napier is famous for.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 6



Explore Hawkes Bay

Discover Hawke's Bay, known in Māori as Te Matau-a-Māui or the fish hook of Māui. This is a region renowned for its Mediterranean charm, iconic Art Deco architecture, and award-winning wineries. Explore Mission Estate, the birthplace of New Zealand wine, or tour vineyards for a deeper dive into its winemaking legacy. Fans of the 1930s can enjoy a Vintage Car Tour, showcasing Napier's architectural gems. Outdoor enthusiasts can cycle over 200km of scenic trails or unwind at pristine beaches like Ocean and Waimarama. Indulge your taste buds with local delights, from honey and chocolate to fresh orchard produce. The Hawkes Bay is also home to an abundance of wildlife, head out on a Gannet Safari or educate yourself at the National Aquarium of New Zealand.

Walking tracks in and around Hawkes Bay

Hawke's Bay offers a variety of scenic walks, from coastal paths to forest trails, perfect for exploring the region's natural beauty. Whether you're looking for a short stroll or a more challenging hike, there's something for everyone. Be sure to check with the Department of Conservation for current conditions before heading out.

Hawkes Bay Wine and Dine Tour with Grape Escape

Experience a fun-filled Grape Escape wine and dine tour in the sun driving through absolutely stunning scenery. Meet like-minded people and share an appreciation of this region's fantastic wine. We visit four to five boutique wineries. Later, we enjoy a light cheese platter on the grounds of Ngatarawa or Sileni, weather dependent. You will taste around 30 different wines along with the main varieties, including Merlot, Syrah, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris, Viognier, and lesser-known aromatics such as Cabernet Franc, Gewurztraminer, and Riesling.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Little Penguin Close Encounter with National Aquarium of New Zealand

The National Aquarium of New Zealand is one of the only places in New Zealand where you can have a Close Encounter with these entertaining little birds. Little Penguins are only found in New Zealand and South Australia. As part of your encounter, you'll also experience what goes on behind the scenes, discovering all about the day-to-day care of these character-filled little birds and taking part in hand-feeding them. Learn about their rescue and rehabilitation and also what you can do to help preserve this special species and their environment.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Native Icons Guided Tour in National Aquarium of New Zealand

The National Aquarium of New Zealand stretches along Napier's Marine Parade. It's home to a wide range of saltwater, freshwater, and land animal exhibits from New Zealand and around the world. Native Icon Guided Tour focuses on wonderful native icons including the Kiwi and Tuatara. It gives you the chance to view Kiwi in the wonderful nocturnal house where day turns into night. You will take a close look at Kiwi eggs, and learn about their quirky habits, favorite meals, and more. Tuatara can be tricky to spot - your guide will uncover the mysteries of New Zealand's 'living fossil' and then introduce you to the famous Little Penguins along with some of our other residents.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Triple Chocolate Dipper Tour with the Silky Oak Chocolate Company

A true chocolate indulgence combining chocolate tasting at Silky Oak Chocolate factory shop, entry into the Chocolate "Thru' the Ages" Museum, a Chocolate drink (or tea/coffee), chocolate muffin/ slice, served with liquid chocolate and cream at their Cafe; . You'll be presented with a bonus take-home gift - chocolate of course! This is chocolate overload for serious chocoholics!

Your accommodation: Art Deco Masonic Hotel

The Art Deco Masonic Hotel occupies a significant historic building on Napier's waterfront and has been richly refurbished in keeping with the Art Deco architecture. With its central location and decadent décor, this is the best place to experience what Napier is famous for.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 7



Napier to Martinborough

As you leave the rolling countryside of the Hawke's Bay you'll be greeted with some of the country's richest dairy farmland in the Manawatu Gorge. Continue on through the Wairarapa region and stop in the Pukaha Mount Bruce Wildlife Centre, where you can see some of New Zealand native animals. Take another break in Masterson, and visit the interactive Woolshed Museum to learn about sheep farming in New Zealand. As you drive south, a visit to historic Greytown is a must-do. Take in the restored Victorian buildings and make time for a cup of tea at one of its quaint cafes. Leaving state highway 2 you will cross over the Ruamahanga River into Martinborough wine country your destination for the day.

Martinborough

Known for producing some of the world's finest wines, the Martinborough region is home to over 30 vineyards, many of which are easily accessible from the town center. A great way to begin your exploration is at the Martinborough Wine Centre, where you can sample wines from all the local labels and plan your itinerary. For a more relaxed experience, consider booking a guided tour so you can fully enjoy the tastings without having to drive.

In 2023, Martinborough was designated as a Dark Sky Reserve, a rare honor that highlights the exceptional quality of its night sky. This celestial status adds another layer of magic to the area, inviting you to pair the region's exquisite wines with an evening of spectacular stargazing.

Your accommodation: Parihua Resort Martinborough

On the edge of Martinborough lies Parihua Resort - a sprawling country estate with large sweeping gardens, luxury accommodation and panoramic views. Each unique cottage has been individually styled and delightfully detailed. The resort is situated amongst beautiful vineyards.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 8



Martinborough in a Day Personal Wine Tour with Martinborough Wine Tours - Includes Lunch

Martinborough in a Day is a private, chauffeur-driven tour offering a comprehensive one-day experience of everything Martinborough, New Zealand's premier wine village, has to offer. The tour includes all tasting fees, lunch with wine and dessert, and convenient pickups and drop-offs around Martinborough. This unique and exclusive wine tour provides behind-the-scenes access, often to areas not open to the general public. Your friendly and knowledgeable wine tour host will ensure your day is both enjoyable and enlightening. You'll have the opportunity to taste regional cuisine, sample exquisite wines, meet local winemakers and growers, and immerse yourself in Martinborough's culture, including a visit to an olive oil producer.

Your accommodation: Parehua Resort Martinborough

On the edge of Martinborough lies Parehua Resort - a sprawling country estate with large sweeping gardens, luxury accommodation and panoramic views. Each unique cottage has been individually styled and delightfully detailed. The resort is situated amongst beautiful vineyards.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 9



Martinborough to Wellington City

Cross the Remutaka Ranges as you make your way to New Zealand's capital city, Wellington. Often compared to Melbourne, Wellington is vibrant cultural hub. Home to the nation's centre of government. Legislation happens in the aptly named 'Beehive', an executive wing attached to the Houses of Parliament. At 1km squared, the city centre (easily traversed on foot) has an international feel and is peppered with underground art shows, alleyway cafes and New York style delis. Take in the boardwalk view as you stroll to Te Papa Museum or indulge your cinematic side exploring Weta Workshop, the Oscar Award winning design studio for Lord Of The Rings. For a taste of vintage fashion, spend some time (and dollars!) on Cuba Street browsing the boutiques. Work off last night's dinner with a cycling tour of Oriental Bay and undo your good work with a Hokey Pokey ice-cream in the sun. For those heading further down, the capital is where you board the ferry crossing the Cook Strait to the South Island.

Explore Wellington museums

Discover Wellington's vibrant museum scene, where history, art, and culture collide. Te Papa Tongarewa, New Zealand's national museum, offers immersive exhibits exploring the nation's art, culture, and natural history. The Wellington Museum shares the fascinating stories of the Wellington region. For art lovers, City Gallery Wellington showcases cutting-edge contemporary works from local and international artists. Perfect for all ages, Wellington's museums blend education and inspiration, making them a must-visit in the capital.

Zealandia By Night Wildlife Sanctuary Tour

Taking a night tour of Zealandia wildlife eco-sanctuary is an unforgettable experience and one that comes highly recommended. A conservation success and safe haven for some of New Zealand's rarest native animals, Zealandia is home to many remarkable species of birds, reptiles and insects living wild within a beautiful 225 hectare (one square mile) valley, just 10 minutes from the central city.

Your accommodation: Naumi Hotel Wellington

Naumi Studio Wellington, an iconic heritage landmark in the heart of the Cuba Street precinct. After an extensive renovation, this 116-room property has transformed into visual feast for the senses, enthralling guests with eclectic spaces inspired from seafaring, the library world and enduring love.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 10



Taste Buds for Foodies Private Tour with Capital Personalised Tour - Lunch Included

The name says it all - if you're a foodie (well, aren't we all?) this is the tour for you. Discover locally-made treats and secret spots in Petone and Wellington. Price will include lunch with refreshments plus tasting fees.

Your accommodation: Naumi Hotel Wellington

Naumi Studio Wellington, an iconic heritage landmark in the heart of the Cuba Street precinct. After an extensive renovation, this 116-room property has transformed into visual feast for the senses, entralling guests with eclectic spaces inspired from seafaring, the library world and enduring love.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 11



Return your vehicle to Wellington Airport

Explore more of Wellington before dropping your rental car at the airport depot and continuing your onward journey.

Farewell from Aotearoa / New Zealand

Bid farewell to Aotearoa / New Zealand, taking with you unforgettable memories of its breathtaking landscapes and incredible adventures. In Māori, it is said mā te wā, which is not goodbye, it is see you soon!

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	North Island Self Drive
Starts:	Auckland
Finishes:	Wellington
Tour length:	11
Accommodation:	Hotel 4 star
Car/transport type:	

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Grand Millennium Auckland
Day 2	Grand Millennium Auckland
Day 3	Grand Millennium Auckland
Day 4	Millennium Hotel Rotorua
Day 5	Art Deco Masonic Hotel
Day 6	Art Deco Masonic Hotel
Day 7	Parehua Resort Martinborough
Day 8	Parehua Resort Martinborough
Day 9	Naumi Hotel Wellington
Day 10	Naumi Hotel Wellington