

AAT Kings: New Zealand Vista 26/27

You could spend eons exploring New Zealand's North and South Islands. But you can also experience a New Zealand tour in two weeks - if you have the right advice. Follow us for Franz Josef Glacier/Ka Roimata o Hine Hukatere tours, train rides through alpine tundra, Milford Sound/Piopirotahi cruises in the company of dolphins and whales, glowing Waitomo Caves tours... and some down time amid wineries and city restaurants that take home awards.

Starts in: Auckland
 Finishes in: Christchurch
 Length: 14days / 13nights
 Accommodation: Hotel 3 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:

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| Includes: All coach transport | Includes: All pick ups/drop offs at destinations |
| Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring | Included: Church of the Good Shepherd at Tekapo |
| Included: Franz Josef Glacier | Included: Huka Falls |
| Included: Interislander Ferry | Included: Milford Sound Cruise |
| Included: Te Puia Indigenous Experience | Included: Tekapo Dark Sky Experience |
| Included: TranzAlpine Train | Included: TSS Earnslaw cruise & BBQ dinner at Walter Peak High Country Farm |
| Included: Waitomo GlowWorm Caves | Included: Visit Arrowtown |
| : 13 breakfasts, 6 dinners | |

Day 1

Auckland never fails to turn on the charm, as you'll discover while exploring the city before meeting your fellow adventure-seekers. Peruse waterfront precincts filled with yachts or hit up the CBD to discover local designers. Turns out Kiwi creativity is surging. This evening, your Travel Director will welcome you and will brief you on your tour.

Staying in:

- Holiday Inn Express Auckland City Centre (1 night)
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Day 2

After a morning of sightseeing, set your GPS for the Waikato River to Waitomo Caves. Here, your cruise route is cast in a magical light by thousands of glowworms. It's a landscape almost as otherworldly as Rotorua, where mud pops and jettisons from bubbling geysers, and steam rushes skywards from cracks in the Earth. Tonight, delve deep into Māori traditions with the Te Pō Indigenous Experience at Te Puia. It begins with an exhilarating cultural performance in a beautifully carved meeting house, Te Aronui a Rua, followed by views of the Pohutu Geyser, one of New Zealand's geothermal wonderlands, and ends with a delicious buffet dinner of hāngī-inspired cuisine.

Staying in:

- Ibis Rotorua Hotel (1 night)
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Day 3

We're leaving you up to your own devices today. But have plenty of North Island tour travel tips, depending on your mood. How about an Optional Experience*? Want a bit of down time? Bliss out at Wai Ariki Hot Springs & Spa. Hobbit fans will want to take advantage of the opportunity to tour the sights featured in The Lord of the Rings movies at Hobbiton. These beautiful landscapes are not only a bucket list tour for Hobbit fans, but a gorgeous countryside getaway. The choice is yours.

Staying in:

- Ibis Rotorua Hotel (1 night)
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Day 4

A staggering 220,000 litres of water thunder over Huka Falls' 11-metre high escarpment every second. It creates quite the calamity. From here, the road ahead unfolds in a broad panorama of Lake Taupo, its waters so vivid and blue they resemble an Ice Mint. Traverse the Kapiti Coast to New Zealand's cool little capital, Wellington, where there are so many restaurants and bars to choose from, you'll need a guidebook. Wait, you have an in-the-know Travel Director to talk to.

Staying in:

- James Cook Grand Chancellor (1 night)
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Day 5

Forget everything else you have to do today and focus on one thing: getting a cup of Wellington's amazing coffee. The city is known for its uber-cool cafes, designed to fuel you through a session at Te Papa, the Museum of New Zealand (entrance fee applies). Wellington sightseeing done and dusted: onwards to the ferry for a cruise across Cook Strait, from the North Island to the South, through a maze of arms and inlets into the sleepy seaside village of Picton.

Staying in:

- Picton Beachcomber Inn, Picton Yacht Club (1 night)
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Day 6

There aren't many beaches more dramatic than the sands of Kaikoura. Bonus points if you spot a sea lion or sperm whale frolicking offshore, Kaikoura is the marine wildlife centre of New Zealand. Talk to your Travel Director for tips on the essential restaurants to dine in tonight – Christchurch has reinvented itself in more ways than one.

Staying in:

- Ibis Hotel Christchurch (1 night)
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Day 7

From its devastating 2010/11 earthquakes, Christchurch has become one of the most forward-thinking cities in the world when it comes to design. Case in point the mind-bending Transitional Cathedral, made largely of cardboard, and Turanga, the gold-clad central library. This Christchurch tour is as eye-opening as it is educational. From here, your outlook is the Canterbury Plains: the turquoise waters of Lake Tekapo, snow-capped mountains and atmospheric towns. Your Indoor Dark Sky Astronomy Experience at Tekapo, a MAKE TRAVEL MATTER® Experience hosted by passionate guides, will forever change the way you see the night sky. You'll see for yourself it may be one of the quietest spots on the planet, yet it has one of the busiest skies in the universe.

Staying in:

- Distinction Heritage Gateway Hotel (1 night)
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Day 8

Your visit to Clyde will have your camera clicking non-stop. This charming historic town may be small, but it's full of character, with its town centre designated as a historic precinct, featuring buildings from its gold mining past now transformed into cafes and shops. Next, head to Gore, the Country Music capital of New Zealand, before continuing to Fiordland National Park and stunning Te Anau, nestled on the shores of the South Island's largest lake. Immerse yourself in the serenity - this is as good as it gets.

Staying in:

- Distinction Luxmore Hotel (1 night)
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Day 9

From the moment you step outside today, nature rules. Your route through Fiordland National Park is an intoxicating union of beech forests, alluvial flats, meadows and mirror-like lakes. Gin-clear rivers carve the countryside, with all roads leading to Milford Sound/Piopiotahi. Venture out into the pristine fiord on an included sightseeing cruise for awe-inspiring scenery with towering cliffs, tumbling waterfalls and abundant wildlife. Seals, penguins and the New Zealand alpine parrot, the Kea are a common sight.

Staying in:

- Distinction Luxmore Hotel (1 night)
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Day 10

Today on your New Zealand tour, travel the aptly named Devil's Staircase. Winding along the edge of Lake Wakatipu, the Devil's Staircase from Kingston to Queenstown is a breathtaking stretch of road with a combination of lake and Mountain views. Visit the historic gold rush village of Arrowtown, where you can wander the streets, lined with trees and character-filled boutiques, then continue to Queenstown for your two-night stay in the adventure capital of New Zealand. Tonight, glide across Lake Wakatipu aboard the historic TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak High Country Farm for a gourmet barbecue dinner and farm show.

Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort Queenstown Lakefront (1 night)
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Day 11

Take today at your own pace; you won't be lost for things to do in Queenstown. Here are some Optional Experiences*. Like adventure? Feel the wind in your hair on the high-octane jet boat ride, perhaps. There's a reason why Queenstown is known as the "Adventure Capital of the World". Nature lover? Discover some of New Zealand's feathered friends at Kiwi Park.

Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort Queenstown Lakefront (1 night)
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Day 12

Journey past shimmering Lake Hawea and through Haast Pass with its powerful waterfalls and dramatic mountain backdrops to the pretty town of Franz Josef/Waiau where time is available to experience an Optional Experience* scenic flight (weather permitting) over the spectacular glaciers.

Staying in:

- Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier (1 night)
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Day 13

Swap white at Franz Josef Glacier/Kā Roimata o Hine Hukatere for green at Hokitika: the pounamu (native jade) found here is the stuff jewellery dreams are made of. Just when you thought your adventure couldn't get any better, you'll board the TranzAlpine train bound for Christchurch, through tunnels and over viaducts with panoramic views of snow-capped peaks, icy rivers, beech forests, gorges and river valleys. Tonight, enjoy dinner and drinks to toast your holiday.

Staying in:

- Ibis Hotel Christchurch (1 night)
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Day 14

Two islands, two weeks. It's remarkable what you can see when you have the right people guiding you.

Tour details

Departures: Daily
Tour type: Guided Coach Tour
Starts: Auckland
Finishes: Christchurch
Tour length: 14
Accommodation: Hotel 3 star
Car/transport type:

Accommodation summary