Daniel Collins - Fine Travel
64 9 363 2754
www.finetravel.co.nz

AAT Kings: Kia Ora New Zealand 25/26

It's hard to pick a highlight of this New Zealand tour from north to south. Is it the fiords and glaciers of Milford Sound/Piopiotahi, explored on a tour? The gem-like Bay of Islands from Auckland? The bubbling geysers and thermal springs of Rotorua? Or perhaps the mountain vistas of Queenstown? In between you have cosmopolitan cities, wineries, train rides, beaches… how does one country pack so much punch?

Starts in:	Auckland
Finishes in:	Christchurch
Length:	17days / 16nights
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:

Includes: All coach transport

Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring

Included: Wellington Orientation tour

Included: Waitangi Treaty Grounds

Included: TranzAlpine Train

Included: Queenstown Orientation Tour

Included: Maori Village Experience & Hangi (dinner), Rotorua

Included: Indoor Dark Sky Experience

Included: Franz Josef Glacier

Included: Cruise on the Interislander Ferry

Included: Auckland City Tour

Includes: All pick ups/drop offs at destinations

Included: Christchurch Orientation Tour

Included: Waitomo GlowWorm Caves

Included: TSS Earnslaw cruise & BBQ dinner at Walter Peak High Country Farm

Included: Te Puia Indigenous Experience

Included: Milford Sound Cruise

Included: Interislander Ferry

Included: Huka Falls

Included: Dunedin Orientation Tour

Included: Church of the Good Shepherd at Tekapo

: 16 breakfasts, 8 dinners

Day 1

Auckland is hypnotic, the kind of place you could easily lose yourself in for a couple of days. Or weeks. Arrive at your leisure and explore waterfront precincts filled with yachts or just meet your Travel Director tonight who will brief you on your tour.

Staying in:

- Holiday Inn Express Auckland City Centre (1 night)

Day 2

Say goodbye to the 'City of Sails' as you journey north to New Zealand's dramatic Bay of Islands – 140 islands ringed by turquoise sea. It's undeniably beautiful, but it also holds a special historical significance: this is where the Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840, between Captain William Hobson and Māori chiefs. You are welcomed to the grounds with a rousing cultural performance. Your guide, perhaps a descendent of one of the original signatories, will explain the significance of the site, while pointing out the world's largest ceremonial war canoe and a carved meeting house.

Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort (1 night)

Day 3

If there's a travel destination that inspires wanderlust, the Bay of Islands is it. Today, trip the light fantastic and head off in whatever direction you please. Perhaps travel up to Cape Reinga/Te Rerenga Wairua, the very top of New Zealand, via idyllic Ninety Mile Beach. or enjoy a scenic cruise among the 144 islands including lunch and a visit to the iconic hole in the rock. Or join a tour of Russell and learn more about the settling of the Bay of Islands (all own expense).

Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort (1 night)

Day 4

Today, New Zealand's most northerly city is well and truly on your radar. Whangarei is like the country in a tantalising snapshot – a union of nature and forward-thinking culture. Explore at your leisure before sinking back into your seat for the mesmerizing commute back to Auckland.

Staying in:

- Holiday Inn Express Auckland City Centre (1 night)

Day 5

After viewing the city sights, set your GPS for the Waitomo Caves. Cruising cavernous waterways, your 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. Explore Te Puia's geothermal valley, and learn about Māori history and culture on this guided experience. 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 locally sourced hāngī-inspired cuisine - a MAKE TRAVEL MATTER® Experience.

Staying in:

- Ibis Rotorua Hotel (1 night)

Day 6

Explore at your own pace today, but with plenty of tips from your Travel Director. Want a bit of down time? We wouldn't blame you for simply blissing out at Wai Ariki Hot Springs & Spa. Hobbit fans will want to take advantage of today's opportunity to visit 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 (all own expense).

Staying in:

- Ibis Rotorua Hotel (1 night)

Day 7

You'll hear Huka Falls well before you see it – at this natural wonder, a staggering 220,000 litres of water thunder over an 11-metre-high waterfall every second. The road ahead unfolds in a broad panorama of Lake Taupo, its waters so vivid and blue you'll think someone has taken the glasses off your nose and cleaned them for the first time. 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 about your Wellington tour.

Staying in:

- Travelodge Wellington (1 night)

Day 8

Wellington is known for its uber-cool cafes, grab yourself a coffee to fuel you through your city sights tour. Onwards for a cruise across Cook Straight, from the North Island to the South, through a maze of arms and inlets.

Staying in:

- Picton Beachcomber Inn (1 night)

Day 9

There aren't many beaches more dramatic than the sands of Kaikoura. Bonus points if you spot a seal 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)

Day 10

A Christchurch tour shows you that the city is not only rebuilding itself after the devastating 2010/11 earthquakes, but is changing the way architects think about design. Case in point the mind-bending Transitional Cathedral, made largely of cardboard, and Turanga, the gold-clad central library. 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 in Takapo, hosted by passionate local specialists, 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)

Day 11

If you've ever wanted to see New Zealand's oldest public gardens, today you're in luck. Oamaru, with its stately tree-lined streets and limestone buildings, stands proud before you journey further south toward the 'Edinburgh of the South'. Dunedin's Scottish ancestry is everywhere you look, from the manicured grounds of Otago University to Larnach Castle. It's easy to while away the afternoon in the city's atmospheric art-lined alleys. Or venture further afield to discover the wildlife that thrives in this pretty pocket of the country – fur seals and penguins among them.

Staying in:

- Scenic Hotel Dunedin City (1 night)

Day 12

Departing Dunedin this morning, rolling green hills dotted with doe-eyed sheep are replaced by soaring mountains as you weave your way into

Fiordland National Park and the South Island's biggest lake and the town of Te Anau, home to magical glowworm-filled caves accessed by boat across the lake. We highly recommend a visit. Soak up the serenity – it doesn't get any better than this.
Staying in:

- Distinction Luxmore Hotel (1 night)

Day 13

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. Cruising this World Heritage-listed expanse will give you goosebumps, a string of waterfalls creating a misty curtain across sheer escarpments. Venture out into the Fiord on a sightseeing cruise, where fur seals and various seabirds are a common sight.
Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort Queenstown (1 night)

Day 14

Take today at your own pace. Like things fast and furious? 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 country. Nature lover? Discover some of New Zealand's feathered friends at Kiwi Park (both own expense). Wherever you wander, make sure you're back in time to glide across Lake Wakatipu aboard the historic TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak High Country Farm for a gourmet barbecue dinner.
Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort Queenstown (1 night)

Day 15

Try and keep count of today's lakes. Leaving Lake Wakatipu behind, 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. Get some perspective on a scenic flight over Franz Josef Glacier/Ka Roimata o Hine Hukatere – if the weather behaves, you may even get to land on it (own expense).
Staying in:

- Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier (1 night)

Day 16

Swap snow for pounamu (native greenstone or jade) in Hokitika: the pounamu 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 to toast your holiday.
Staying in:

- Ibis Hotel Christchurch (1 night)

Day 17

Two New Zealand islands. Multiple glaciers. Endless lakes. Thermal springs. Black beaches, and white beaches. An endless parade of wildlife. We hope you find the words to describe this epic adventure to your family back home.

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	Guided Coach Tour
Starts:	Auckland
Finishes:	Christchurch
Tour length:	17
Accomodation:	Hotel 3 star
Car/transport type:	

Accommodation summary