

## The Winterless North

Explore the tropical Bay of Islands, the magnificent giant Kauri trees of the Waipoua Forest and the boutique wine region of Matakana, the winterless north is the perfect year round destination. Along the way you'll stay at charming boutique lodges where you can relax in style after each day's adventure.

Starts in: Auckland  
Finishes in: Auckland  
Length: 7days / 6nights  
Accommodation: Boutique Lodges & Hotels  
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: Fully inclusive rental car insurance (excess may apply)

Includes: Unlimited kms

Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring

Included activity: Private Transfer Auckland Airport to your Auckland Accommodation with Tourcorp

Included activity: Electronic Travel Guide and In-Country Support App

Included activity: Waitangi Treaty Grounds Guided Tour and Cultural Performance

6 breakfasts

## 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

Kia ora! 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, it offers something for everyone. 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 the 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.

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Dinner at the Sky Tower Orbit Restaurant

Soaring high above Auckland you'll discover Orbit, a truly iconic New Zealand brasserie offering diners sensational views - and food to match. Situated at the top of Auckland's Sky Tower, the dining room rotates once every hour, providing a truly unique experience with amazing 360-degree panoramas of the city, the Hauraki Gulf and beyond. Orbit offers a modern dining experience in a relaxed, open atmosphere with a delicious kiwi-inspired a la carte menu that features the best local and seasonal produce. As New Zealand's only rotating restaurant offering 360-degree views, it's an unforgettable experience that never ceases to delight.

### Your accommodation: Fable Auckland

Located right on Queen Street the Fable Auckland is boutique and stylish property with an ideal location to enjoy and explore the vibrant heart of the 'City of Sails'.



## Day 2



### Collect Rental Car

Choose a car to best suit your needs from our fantastic rental car range. From compact economy, hatchbacks to prestige SUVs.

### Auckland to Russell

The drive from Auckland to the Bay of Islands normally takes around three and a half hours, but plan to take a little longer for there are many things to see along the way. Stretch your legs in Puhoi, New Zealand's only Bohemian settlement. Go through Warkworth, and Whangarei and see the world famous hundredwasser toilets in Kawakawa. Arriving into Russell via the Opua Ferry, you'll be greeted by lush bush-clad hillsides dropping to golden sandy beaches.

## Russell, Bay of Islands

Russell is easily accessible, just a 15-minute ferry ride from Paihia across the sparkling waters of the Bay of Islands. Alternatively, if you're exploring by car, you can enjoy a scenic drive along the coast to reach this charming town. Once known as the notorious "Hell Hole of the Pacific" in the 19th century, Russell was a bustling hub for whalers and traders on shore leave. Following the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, it even briefly served as New Zealand's capital. However, the town was largely destroyed during the Northern Wars, leading to the capital's relocation to Auckland. As you explore, don't miss Christ Church, New Zealand's oldest house of prayer, just a short stroll from the ferry terminal. Look closely, and you'll still see bullet holes from the Northern Wars! The Marlborough Hotel, proudly situated on the waterfront, holds New Zealand's oldest liquor licence, a testament to the town's lively past. For breathtaking vistas of the Bay and its myriad islands, head up to Flagstaff Hill. This historic site was the scene of Nga Puhi chief Hone Heke's famous flag-pole protests. The current flagpole is the fifth to stand here, after Heke ordered the destruction of the previous four to protest the hanging of Maketu and perceived breaches of the Treaty. Russell is also a mecca for fishing enthusiasts, home to the Bay of Islands Swordfish Club, New Zealand's oldest game fishing club. It boasts the incredible record for the world's largest striped marlin caught with a rod and reel, weighing in at a colossal 243 kg (536 lbs)! Many big game fishing and sightseeing charters operate directly from Russell, offering unforgettable experiences on the water.

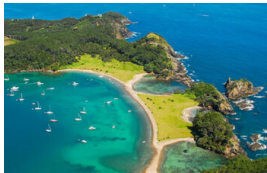
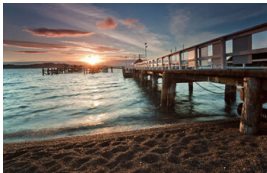
### Your accommodation: Duke of Marlborough Hotel, Russell

The historic Duke of Marlborough Hotel is located on the waterfront in the charming village of Russell. Choose from a range of rooms including the Waterfront rooms with their spectacular views across to Paihia or the family rooms for those needing extra space. The onsite restaurant and bar is also a great place to relax and take in the views.

Meals included: Breakfast



## Day 3



### Explore Bay of Islands

Commonly known as the 'winterless north', New Zealand's Bay of Islands is made up of over 140 subtropical atolls. Renowned for its untouched beaches, abundant marine life, and idyllic climate, this tropical paradise ticks all the boxes. Spend some time on a remote stretch of beach, or see the dolphins on an ocean safari. If diving is your thing, take the morning to descend the Rainbow Warrior - The Greenpeace flagship sunk by French saboteurs in 1985. Wander around Russell, a whaling port founded in 1843. Learn about our culture in historic Waitangi, the site where The Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 between the Māori and Europeans. Alternatively, you may like to take a day tour to Cape Reinga, the very top of the North Island.

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Hole in the Rock Cruise with Fullers GreatSights

Board your cruise and take in the stunning views as you glide out through the islands and along the Rakaumangamanga Peninsula to Cape Brett, where a historic lighthouse keeps watch over and Piercy Island/Motukōkako, or as it is popularly known as the Hole in the Rock. According to Māori legend, local warriors used to paddle through the Hole in the Rock in their canoes before departing for battle. Drops of water from the cave roof above were a good omen. If conditions permit, your skipper will expertly guide the ship through the narrow space. Keep an eye out for common and bottlenose dolphins, whales, and other marine life during your cruise, and have your camera ready as you get up close to the action. Stop off at Otehei Bay on Urupukapuka Island where you have time to relax, take a walk, have a swim, or enjoy a bite to eat and drink from the on-site fully licensed cafe. The purpose-built catamaran is licensed by DOC (the Department of Conservation) for dolphin viewing and the crew has years of experience locating dolphins in these waters.

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Meals included: Breakfast





## Day 4



### Russell, Bay of Islands to Paihia, Bay of Islands

Traveling from Russell to Paihia via Helena Bay offers a wealth of exciting activities and beautiful spots to explore along the way. Starting in Russell, you can delve into the town's rich history with a visit to the Pompallier Mission and Printery or take a short hike up to Flagstaff Hill for panoramic views over the Bay of Islands. The Russell Museum also provides fascinating insights into the region's past. As you leave Russell and head towards Okiato, consider walking the Okiato to Opua Walkway, a scenic track that follows the coastline and offers beautiful views and opportunities to spot native wildlife. Continuing on to Helena Bay, you'll find the Helena Bay Gallery and Cafe, a perfect stop to admire works by New Zealand artists and enjoy a meal with a view. Helena Bay Beach offers a tranquil setting for a relaxing break, whether you want to swim, picnic, or simply soak up the serene surroundings. Further along, Oakura Bay in Whangaruru Harbour is a stunning beach ideal for swimming, kayaking, or sunbathing. For a bit of adventure, explore the hiking trails in Ngaioitonga Scenic Reserve, which take you through native bushland rich with diverse flora and fauna. As you approach Opua, take a short walk to the Opua Forest Lookout for excellent views over the harbor and surrounding area. A detour to Haruru Falls is highly recommended; these impressive falls are accessible via scenic walking tracks through lush forest. Finally, arriving in Paihia, you may wish to visit the Waitangi Treaty Grounds to learn about New Zealand's founding document and enjoy guided tours and cultural performances. The Paihia Wharf is a hub of activity, offering boat tours for dolphin watching, fishing trips, and cruises around the Bay of Islands. Don't miss the chance to enjoy water activities like paddle boarding, kayaking, and jet skiing at Paihia Beach.

### Paihia, Bay of Islands

Paihia, an oceanside gem, played a pivotal role in Aotearoa-New Zealand's history. A visit to the Waitangi Treaty Grounds offers a profound look into the signing of the Waitangi Treaty, where 43 Māori chiefs and 39 Crown representatives shaped the nation's future. Beyond its rich history, Paihia is a haven for water-based activities. From sailing through the Hole in the Rock and dolphin spotting to kayaking or fishing, or perhaps a day relaxing on the beach, this picturesque coastal town is the perfect base to explore the stunning Bay of Islands.

### Waitangi Treaty Grounds Guided Tour and Cultural Performance

Waitangi is one of New Zealand's most historic sites where the Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 between the Māori and the British Government. This two day pass allows you access to the Treaty of Waitangi Grounds and includes admission to the Te Kōngahu Museum and Te Rau Aroha Museum and a Maori Cultural performance. During your guided tour, learn about the history of the treaty and discover the stories and events that shaped New Zealand. The cultural performance inside the carved meeting house includes waiata (singing), poi and the haka - a war dance Aotearoa-New Zealand is well known for.

### Paihia, Bay of Islands to Kerikeri

Take the short drive north to Kerikeri. Kerikeri was one of the first settled areas of New Zealand and the Stone Store and Kemp House, two of New Zealand's oldest buildings still stand and are open to visitors. Kerikeri is the fruit basket of the north and also home to crafts people and producers of artisan food produce, so the farmers market and craft markets are great places to explore. There are also numerous green spaces and forests to wander through, including two 'Gardens of National Significance': Palmco and Wharepuke Gardens which are open daily and fabulous examples of sub-tropical gardens.

### Kemp House

Kemp House also known as Kerikeri Mission House is New Zealand's oldest European building. Built by the London-based Church Missionary Society in 1821 to 1822 with the help of local Maori, it was situated under Ngapuhi Pa and was under the protection of the local tribal chief Hongi Hika. The 2 storey Georgian designed building was built primarily from Kauri. You can visit Kemp House on guided tours, highlights include the garden which has been cultivated since 1820 and is in a similar style to the original garden, as well as furnishings and personal wares from the last missionary family to live here, James Kemp and his wife Charlotte, who went on to purchase Kemp House after the missionary closed and ran a Kauri gum business out of the historic Stone Store. Guided tours operate daily 10am - 5pm Nov - April and 10am - 4pm May - Oct. Closed Christmas Day. Pay on entry and for more information visit The New Zealand Historic Places Trust.

### Your accommodation: Moon Gate Villa

Luxury bed & breakfast accommodation nestled among elegant, sub-tropical gardens. It is situated 2-minute drive from Kerikeri village; a short stroll to local markets; and close to local restaurants, wineries, galleries, and craft shops.

Meals included: Breakfast



## Day 5



### Kerikeri to Cape Reinga and Back

Today, you will visit the northernmost point of the country, the spiritually significant Cape Reinga. Highlights of this day trip include a visit to 90 Mile Beach, dune surfing, and seeing the clashing of two oceans! Sample some of the best fish and chips available on your way back to Kerikeri.

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### Ninety Mile Beach

Situated on the west coast of Northland, Ninety Mile Beach runs from Ahipara in the south to near Cape Reinga at the northern tip of New Zealand. Interestingly, its accurate length is about 30 miles shorter than its name would have us believe.

At low tide 4WD vehicles can drive the length of the beach with many access points along the coastline. At the northern end the Te Paki stream is the most popular access point.

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### Cape Reinga

Cape Reinga, at the northwestern tip of the Aupouri Peninsula, is often mistaken for New Zealand's northernmost point, but that title belongs to Surville Cliffs, 30 km to the east. Here, the Pacific Ocean and Tasman Sea meet, creating dramatic tides. The Cape's lighthouse, built in 1941 and automated in 1987, stands as a beacon of this iconic location. In Māori mythology, Cape Reinga, or Te Rerenga Wairua, is the "leaping off place of spirits" on their journey to Hawaiki. Nearby Tapotupoto Bay and Spirits Bay offer beautiful beaches and are ideal for short rest stops or exploring more of the area's cultural significance.

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Meals included: Breakfast



## Day 6



### Kerikeri to Waipoua Forest

Heading west from Kerikeri you leave the Bay of Islands behind and soon and travel through rural Northland before arriving into the Hokianga and the wilder seas of the Tasman. The small townships of Omapere and Opononi have a great seaside feel and the perfect place to stop for an ice cream. The route now heads south and into the Waipoua Forest, home to the massive Kauri trees. Make sure you allow time to take one of the short walks that are signposted as you pass through the forest. Not to be missed is the 5 minute loop to view the largest of all the trees Tane Mahuta.

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## Kauri Coast

The Kaipara District's Kauri Coast is a magnificent coastal and outdoor retreat. Stretching from Kaiwaka in the South to the Waipoua Forest in the North it offers diversity, history and dramatic landscapes.

Kaiwaka is the southern gateway of the Kaipara District offering a variety of shops, cafes and accommodation. Known as the 'little town of lights', at night time hundreds of twinkling lights welcome travellers. Enjoy the quaint settlement of Paparoa and experience life in rural New Zealand. Here you will find guest house accommodation, restored buildings, restaurant and an excellent antique shop. Just off the highway is the settlement of Pahi on a quiet finger of the Northern Kaipara Harbour. Home of old-time launches and fishing enthusiasts, it also boasts a Moreton Bay fig that is one of the country's 10 most notable trees.

Travelling north on State Highway 12 your next stop is the famous Kauri Museum at Matakoho. Here it is very easy to spend a couple of hours viewing the wonderful displays which portray the history of the Kauri Coast and shopping for great value high-quality souvenirs. Tokatoka Peak (the core of a volcano 180 metres high) is situated just south of Dargaville and is a 20 minute climb. For the more adventurous there is Maungaraho Rock. Allow 30 minutes for the climb to the summit which is 221 metres high.

Dargaville, the Kumara Capital, is a rural town with a population of 4,800 people. Steeped in history and nestled beside the Northern Wairoa River Kauri logging, gum digging, shipbuilding and shipwrecks are the heritage of this characterful place. Each year it hosts such events as the Northland Agricultural Field Days, and several major surfcasting and trout-fishing competitions.

Kauri gum and timber products are a speciality of the Kauri Coast and available from several local galleries and craft shops. There's also a specialist paper mill utilising rice grass from the river. Explore the history of the North and Kaipara Harbour in Dargaville Museum. Here you will find relics from many of the area's shipwrecks.

At Ripiro Beach (Baylys and Chases) just 15 minutes from Dargaville there is a campground, stores for supplies and two cafes serving food and beverages. From here you can take a 4-wheel drive vehicle down this magnificent, unbroken stretch of sand and surf. Extending 100 km from Maunganui Bluff in the north to Pouto Point at the entrance to the Kaipara Harbour in the south. Visitors can take a tour to the remote Pouto Lighthouse and view the site of 150 shipwrecks, dig for shellfish or net for fish.

The lovely Kai Iwi Lakes, 34 kms north of Dargaville, is a favourite holiday spot, where you can swim, sail, windsurf, kayak, water ski, jet ski, trout fish or simply relax. Camping is available at Promenade Point or Pine Beach. Explore the extensive walks around the lakes.

Next stop is a truly wonderful auditorium which portrays swamp kauri in all its different forms. It is set alongside SH12 as you travel north to Tounson Park and Waipoua Forest. Entry is free so call here to view or buy the beautiful kauri furniture, wood turned products and exhibits.

Tane Mahuta is the largest Kauri in the world. 40 minutes from Dargaville, Tounson Park offers a camp ground and holiday park with accommodation. Guided night time walks take you through the forest where you may see kiwi- if you're lucky, weta, glow-worms and more. Horse treks amble through bush, farmland, alongside streams and along the beach.

Enjoy fine dining and unique accommodation just south of the forest entrance before feasting your eyes on Tane Mahuta, the giant kauri tree in Waipoua Forest. An imposing sight as you stand beneath it and a must see when you visit Northland. It is approximately an hour's drive or 50 kms from Dargaville. Here you will view kauri trees up to 2000 years old. There are also numerous walks and tramping tracks within the forest.

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## SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Twilight Waipoua Encounter

Experience the Waipoua Forest at night on this spectacular 4 hour tour. Learn about the rich birdlife and fauna that inhabit the forest, including the carnivorous kauri snail. You'll also get to experience the deep spiritual respect the Maori people have for this place. Your Maori guide will brief you on the protocols for your visit and you once formal greetings have been made you will be allowed to meet the giant Tane Mahuta, or Lord of the Forest - the oldest Kauri tree in the world.

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## Your accommodation: Waipoua Lodge

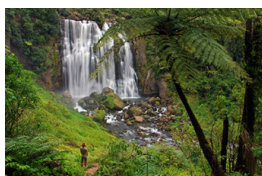
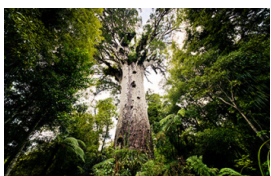
Waipoua Lodge is nestled on a ridge overlooking the mighty Waipoua Forest. Experience authentic New Zealand luxury hospitality in a breathtaking ancient and natural environment. Please contact the property a day or two before your arrival to discuss menu preferences.

Meals included:            Breakfast



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## Day 7



## Waipoua Forest to Auckland

Heading back across country the Matakoho Kauri Museum is an award winning museum and has extensive displays of the regions logging, farming and social history. Just a short drive from Warkworth towards the coast is the small township of Matakana and a little further you will find the often deserted beaches of the Tawharanui Marine Reserve.

The final leg of the journey takes you back along State Highway 1 and the North Shore suburbs before crossing the Auckland Harbour Bridge and into the city.

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Matakohe Kauri Museum

The Kauri Museum is located approximately 90 minutes drive north of Auckland, in the rural backdrop of Matakohe. Offering insight into the region's pioneering history, It charts the rise and fall of the great Kauri forests with stunning displays and detailed exhibitions including: The largest collection of Kauri Gum in the world, a fully furnished 1900's era Kauri house, the largest collection of Kauri furniture in the world, a huge 22 metre long Kauri slab and a magnificent collection of original photographs and pioneering memorabilia.

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## Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	North Island Self Drive
Starts:	Auckland
Finishes:	Auckland
Tour length:	7
Accommodation:	Boutique Lodges & Hotels
Car/transport type:	

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## Included activities

Includes	All breakfasts
Includes	Private airport transfers

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## Accommodation summary

Day 1	Fable Auckland
Day 2	Duke of Marlborough Hotel, Russell
Day 3	Duke of Marlborough Hotel, Russell
Day 4	Moon Gate Villa
Day 5	Moon Gate Villa
Day 6	Waipoua Lodge