

17 Day AAT Kings Kia Ora New Zealand 24/25

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: All pick ups/drop offs at destinations
Includes: Comprehensive tour pack (detailed itinerary, driving, instructions, map/guidebooks, brochures)
Includes: 24/7 support while touring in New Zealand
Included: Cruise on the Interislander Ferry
Included: Huka Falls
Included: Milford Sound Cruise
Included: Te Puia Maori Hangi & Concert
Included: Te Puia Thermal Reserve
Included: Tekapo Dark Sky Experience
Included: TranzAlpine Rail Journey
Included: Waitomo Glow Worm Caves
16 breakfasts, 6 dinners, 2 special dinners



Day 1

Explore waterfront precincts filled with yachts or just meet fellow travel companions for a Welcome Reception tonight.

Staying in:

- Holiday Inn Express, Auckland (1 night)
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Day 2

Say goodbye to the 'City of Sails' as you journey north to the Bay of Islands – 140 droplets of land ringed by turquoise sea. It's undeniably beautiful, but it also holds a special historical secret; this is where the Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840. 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 canoe and a carved meeting house.

Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort (1 night)
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Day 3

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 glide around on an historic tall ship, enjoy a cruise to the iconic Hole in the Rock or join a tour of Russell and learn more about the settling of the Bay of Islands.

Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort (1 night)
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Day 4

Whangarei is a place where waterfalls meet beaches, galleries meet museums. It's 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 mesmerising commute back to Auckland.

Staying in:

- Holiday Inn Express, Auckland (1 night)
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Day 5

After a morning of sightseeing, 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. This evening, explore Te Puia's geothermal valley, and learn about Māori history and culture on this guided experience, which includes a dinner of hangi-inspired cuisine and a cultural performance in a finely carved meeting house, Te Aronui a Rua. It ends on a high at the Pohutu Geyser, where, armed with a hot chocolate you'll view one of New Zealand's geothermal wonderlands.

Staying in:

- Ibis Rotorua Hotel (1 night)
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Day 6

Explore at your own pace today. Want a bit of down time? Bliss out at the Polynesian Spa. Animal lover? Go behind the scenes at a working kiwi hatchery. 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.

Staying in:

- Ibis Rotorua Hotel (1 night)
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Day 7

At Huka Falls, 220,000 litres of water thunder over an 11-metre-high waterfall every second. The road ahead unfolds in a broad panorama of mint-blue Lake Taupo. 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:

- Travelodge Wellington (1 night)
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Day 8

Wellington is known for its uber-cool cafés, designed to fuel you through a session at Te Papa, the Museum of New Zealand. Onwards to the Interislander for a cruise across Cook Strait, from the North Island to the South, through a maze of arms and inlets.

Staying in:

- Picton Yacht Club (1 night)
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Day 9

There aren't many beaches more dramatic than the black sands of Kaikoura. Bonus points if you spot a sea lion or sperm whale frolicking offshore. Your Travel Director has tips on where to dine tonight.

Staying in:

- Wyndham Garden (1 night)
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Day 10

On your city tour view 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 Tekapo, 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:

- Heritage Gateway Hotel (1 night)
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Day 11

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. While away the afternoon in the city's art-lined alleys, or venture further afield to discover the wildlife that thrives here – fur seals and penguins among them.

Staying in:

- Scenic Hotel Dunedin City (1 night)
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Day 12

Weave your way into Fiordland National Park and the South Island's biggest lake and the town of Te Anau.

Staying in:

- Distinction Luxmore Hotel (1 night)
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Day 13

Your route through Fiordland National Park is an intoxicating union of beech forests, alluvial flats, meadows and mirror-like lakes. All roads lead to Milford Sound/Piopiotahi, where a string of waterfalls create a misty curtain across sheer escarpments. Venture out into the Fiord on a sightseeing cruise, where dolphins and seals are a common sight.

Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort (1 night)
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Day 14

Take Queenstown at your own pace today. Feel the wind in your hair on a high octane jet boat ride, perhaps. 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 (1 night)
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Day 15

Leaving Lake Wakatipu behind, Arrowtown and Lake Dunstan appear on the horizon. Then there's Lake Hawea followed by Lake Wanaka, with its Instagrammable shoreline of poplars and willows. Over the Haast Pass, the pretty town of Franz Josef/Waiau awaits.

Staying in:

- Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier (1 night)
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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 aboard the TranzAlpine train bound for Christchurch, through tunnels and over viaducts with panoramic views.

Staying in:

- Wyndham Garden (1 night)
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Day 17

Two islands, glaciers, lakes, thermal springs and a parade of wildlife... We hope you find the words to describe this epic adventure.

Tour details

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

Included activities

Includes	8 dinners
Includes	All breakfasts
Includes	Airport transfers
Includes	TranzAlpine Train from Arthur's Pass to Christchurch
Includes	Interislander ferry crossing
Includes	Hole in the Rock Dolphin Cruise
Includes	Tamaki Maori Village show and dinner, Rotorua
Includes	Waitomo Glow Worm Caves
Includes	Huka Falls Taupo
Includes	TSS Earnslaw cruise and dinner at Walter Peak high country farm, Queenstown
Includes	Wellington City Sights Tour
Includes	Greenstone Jade craft experience
Includes	Christchurch City Sights tour
Includes	Te Papa Museum of New Zealand

Accommodation summary