Exodus Travel agency
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New Zealand Wine Region Explorer

This incredible itinerary guides you through some of New Zealand's most fantastic wine regions, including Hawke's Bay, Martinborough, Marlborough, Waipara, and Central Otago. You'll savour each region with local wine experts, uncovering hidden gems and celebrated vineyards. The tour also features a breathtaking scenic flight over Queenstown, complete with a private picnic lunch that showcases the region's stunning beauty. In the evenings, you'll unwind in luxurious boutique lodges and hotels, ensuring a truly relaxing and indulgent experience.

Starts in:	Queenstown
Finishes in:	Auckland
Length:	18days / 17nights
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: Unlimited kms

Included activity: Private Transfer Queenstown Airport to your Accommodation

Included activity: The Visitor Promise - Cultural Learning Course

Includes: Fully inclusive rental car insurance (excess may apply)

Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring

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

Included activity: Interislander Ferry Picton to Wellington with exclusive access to the Premium Plus Lounge

plus much more...

Day 1

Private Transfer Queenstown Airport to your Accommodation

On arrival you will be met by a private driver and delivered to your Queenstown accommodation.

Welcome to Queenstown

Renowned for its adrenaline inducing activities Queenstown is synonymous with adventure. Parked on the shores of Lake Wakatipu this small alpine town is nestled below soaring vistas of The Remarkables Mountain Range. While arguably the brightest gem in New Zealand’s crown, Queenstown offers far more than an action-packed getaway. Spend time on the Gibbston wine trail and end with a meal at Michelin star chef Josh Emett’s restaurant, Rata. Take a trip down memory lane on a 100 year old steamship the TSS Earnslaw. Soak in the scenery on your walk around the lake, or venture further afield into Fiordland National Park. Head over the hill to resort town Wanaka, or re-live scenes from Lord Of The Rings by four wheel drive. But - if you really do want that rush - head out on the Shotover Jet, dive off the Nevis Bungy, freefall on the Canyon swing or Zip line the Gondola. Just be sure it's done on an empty stomach – don’t say we didn’t warn you!

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Appellation Boutique Wine Tour

Discover Central Otago’s world class wine history and cuisine on this fun interactive small group tour. Traveling in a luxury minivan with a specialist guide you will explore three contrasting sub regions Gibbston Bannockburn and Cromwell tasting at four premium boutique vineyards. Indulge in a gourmet platter style lunch of locally sourced produce perfectly complemented by a flight of estate wines. Enjoy ample photo opportunities over the Bannockburn Inlet and Lake Dunstan complete with a historic stroll through Old Cromwell Town.

Your accommodation: The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter

The Dairy Private Hotel – a unique blend of exquisite design, rich history and warm hospitality in the city centre. Beginning as Queenstown’s original ‘dairy’ (corner store) in 1920, it has now transformed into an interiors masterpiece after an exquisite refurbishment that features wallpapers from British luxury interiors brand House of Hackney.

Day 2

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Shotover Jet Canyon Jet Boat Ride

Shotover Jet is the only company permitted to operate in the Shotover River Canyons. It's a thrilling ride! Skim past rocky outcrops at close range in your Shotover Jet 'Big Red', as you twist and turn through the narrow canyons at breathtaking speeds. And a major highlight - hold tight for the world-famous Shotover Jet full 360-degree spins! It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information please see here.

Everything Queenstown Private Tour with Remarkable Scenic Tours

Visit Queenstown's most popular and iconic landmarks in this incredible private experience with Remarkables Scenic Tours. Take off with your guide and journey to Arrowtown to explore the Chinese Village, with time to explore the shops and relax. If you enjoy wine, get taken to a winery in the Gibbston Valley, Central Otago's premier wine region, stopping at the best photo locations along the way. Learn about history and culture, discover hidden gems and listen to captivating stories from your local and knowledgeable guide.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - 60 Minute Social Sauna Session at Watershed Saunas Queenstown

Forget everything you know about traditional spas. Step onto a floating pontoon and into a world of heat and ice, right in the heart of Queenstown. This isn't just a sauna; it’s a front-row seat to the dramatic peaks of the Remarkables, all while bobbing gently on the crystal-clear waters of Lake Whakatipu.
Over 60 invigorating minutes, you’ll cycle through the deep, restorative heat of the timber sauna and the thrill of the glacial plunge. Whether you’re brave enough to tip a waterfall bucket of lake water over your head or prefer to lounge on the deck soaking up the alpine air, the rhythm is entirely yours. This is pure, floating bliss that leaves you glowing long after you step back onto the wharf.

Your accommodation: The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter

The Dairy Private Hotel – a unique blend of exquisite design, rich history and warm hospitality in the city centre. Beginning as Queenstown’s original ‘dairy’ (corner store) in 1920, it has now transformed into an interiors masterpiece after an exquisite refurbishment that features wallpapers from British luxury interiors brand House of Hackney.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 3

Private Transfer Queenstown Accommodation to Airport (LSQ)

You will be collected from your hotel and transferred to Queenstown airport.

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.

Queenstown to Wanaka

Leaving Queenstown you'll drive over New Zealand's highest sealed road, the Crown Range before arriving into the resort town of Wanaka.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Lake Wanaka Happy Hour Cruise

Leaving from the Wānaka lakefront, take a gentle cruise around picturesque Lake Wānaka while relaxing with a glass of wine or local beer and a selection of cheeses. The cruise is fully licensed so further drinks can be purchased on board. The cruise takes you toward the 'Wānaka Tree' before tracking up to Waterfall Creek and Ruby Island. You then head across to Stevensons Peninsula before returning via Beacon Point and Eely Point.

Your accommodation: Edgewater Wanaka

Edgewater is Wanaka's leading hotel located right on the edge of Lake Wanaka. A short stroll to the town centres shops, cafes and restaurants and close to many walking trails the resort is ideal to explore this wonderful Alpine setting.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 4

Wanaka Wine Tours Classic Wine Tour

The Classic Full Day Wine Tour is a small group tour (maximum 8) that explores the scenery, history, food and wines of Central Otago. Enjoy an unhurried amble through five of the region's finest wineries, pausing only to admire the ever-present views. Savour the unique atmosphere of the arts, crafts and history of Old Cromwell Town and share the unforgettable indulgence of a gourmet platter lunch.

Your accommodation: Edgewater Wanaka

Edgewater is Wanaka's leading hotel located right on the edge of Lake Wanaka. A short stroll to the town centres shops, cafes and restaurants and close to many walking trails the resort is ideal to explore this wonderful Alpine setting.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 5

Wanaka to Franz Josef

The route follows the shores of Lakes Wanaka and Hawea before you enter the village of Makarora, the gateway to Mt. Aspiring National Park. The Blue Pools, just outside Makarora, are a wonderful 30-minute walk through pristine native beech forest. Descending into Mt. Aspiring National Park and towards the Haast Pass, crashing rivers and waterfalls are around every corner. Crossing the Haast River you are now truly on the wild West Coast, a 600-kilometre stretch of bush, rainforest, and podocarp forest. First Fox Glacier welcomes you to the glacier region and Franz Josef township is just a further 45 minutes' drive over the impressive Fox Hills.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Franz Josef Glacier Helihike with Franz Josef Glacier Guides

After a thrilling scenic flight, high above the rugged terrain, you will land on the glacier, ready to undertake a guided glacier hike. Your friendly guide will lead you through some of the most pristine and awe-inspiring glacial scenery in the world. Your guide will choose your route carefully as you go and, with an eye for the most spectacular ice formations, you’ll soon be making your way through an extraordinary landscape of towering peaks and glistening blue ice. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity prior to travel. For more information please see here.

Your accommodation: Legacy Te Waonui Hotel Franz Josef

Set within dense native podocarp forest at Franz Josef, Te Waonui Forest Retreat pairs low-impact timber architecture with deep wilderness immersion. Broad glass walls and private balconies open into tree-fern canopies, drawing natural light, dense greenery, and shifting West Coast weather into quiet interior spaces. Positioned on the boundary of Westland Tai Poutini National Park, the lodge provides a calm, atmospheric base for exploring glacier valleys, rainforest tracks, and regional dining at an unhurried pace.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 6

Franz Josef to Greymouth Train Station (Return Rental Car)

Head north along the mighty West Coast highway you pass through ancient temperate rainforests while getting sneak peeks of the wild coast beach occasionally. Whataroa is the next town where you can see one of the world's rarest birds, the Kōtuku - White Heron. The Kōtuku nest at the Waitangi Roto Nature Reserve, only accessible with a guided tour from October to March. The next town is Ross which is the site of an old gold mining settlement where the local information centre offers you the chance to pan for gold. Hokitika is a great place to explore craft and gift stores and head to the coast and take in the endless sea views. The Pounamu-Greenstone on offer in Hokitika is probably some of the best you will see in the country. Continue on to Greymouth, the largest town on the West Coast and the starting point for the next leg of your journey the TranzAlpine Scenic Train. Drop your rental car at the Greymouth Train Station depot located at the train station building before boarding your train to Christchurch.

Return your rental car

Return your rental vehicle to your designated depot before your next adventure.

TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Greymouth to Christchurch

Considered one of the world's great train journeys, the TranzAlpine Scenic Train takes you from Greymouth to Christchurch. Travel across the South Island from the west to the east coast through Arthur's Pass National Park. From the comfort of your carriage see lush beech forest, deep river valleys and the spectacular peaks of the Southern Alps. Descend to the windswept Canterbury Plains before arriving in the city of Christchurch.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - TranzAlpine Scenic Plus Addon - KiwiRail

Feel like luxurious service, exclusive meals, inclusive drinks and priority check-in and boarding? The Scenic Plus add-on option is for you. Enjoy personal service with panoramic windows, spacious carriages and comfortable seating. The exclusive open-air viewing carriage is available if you feel like capturing the ultimate photo or simply wish to experience the great outdoors whilst travelling through the Southern Alps. Your food is prepared exclusively in a kitchen carriage, with paired drinks and a paddock-to-plate regionally inspired food menu all your senses will be fully engaged on this journey.

Shared Transfer from Christchurch Train Station to Christchurch CBD Accommodation with Christchurch Touring Company

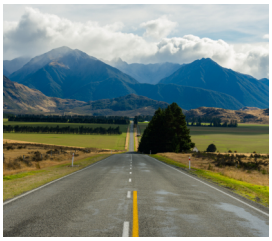
On arrival at the Christchurch railway station, you will be met by a driver and transferred to your Christchurch accommodation.

Your accommodation: Merivale Manor House

Originally built in the 1880's, Merivale Manor has been transformed into elegant motel and apartment accommodation. Less than 200 metres to central Merivale with its premier shopping, restaurants, cafes and bars.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 7



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Akaroa & the Banks Peninsula

The Banks Peninsula lies just around 1 hour from Christchurch city centre. Formed by ancient volcanic eruptions, the region's first settlers were Maori who recognised its potential for shelter and food. The sealers and whalers followed them, and European colonists founded and settled Akaroa, Little River and Lyttelton and many of the Peninsula's other bays. Abounding with wildlife and history, it's a great place to spend the day exploring.
The jewel is Akaroa, which lies just over 70 kilometres from central Christchurch, and the drive to this picturesque harbour town is a wonderful experience in itself, as it can either take you via the port of Lyttelton and along the bays or over the Summit Road of the Port Hills.
The well-signposted tourist routes will guide you on a loop around the peninsula and through some spectacular and rugged farmland scenery. As you approach the small settlement of Duvauchelle, you are greeted by New Zealand's oldest hotel.
The town of Akaroa has rather a French feel with many flags flying and cottages and streets with distinctly non-kiwi names. The reason being that 63 Frenchmen arrived here to settle the Banks Peninsula under the French Flag, only to find the British had beaten them by 5 days. Their influence on architecture, combined with a Victorian seaside feel, makes the town a delightful place to spend an afternoon. There are many activities, such as nature cruises and swimming with dolphins. Be sure to visit the quirky The Giant's House, a unique and whimsical garden and mosaic sculpture gallery.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Akaroa Harbour Nature Cruise with Black Cat

Experience majestic scenery and stunning wildlife daily on a Black Cat Akaroa Harbour Nature Cruise. You’ll see the rare, native dolphin – the Hector’s or New Zealand Dolphin. There’s also the chance to spot the world’s smallest penguin, the White Flippered Little Blue Penguin, Fur Seals and other sea birds. Other cruise highlights are some majestic volcanic cliffs (including the impressive Cathedral Cave) and signs of Akaroa’s fascinating past including early Maori, French and British settlements.

Your accommodation: Merivale Manor House

Originally built in the 1880's, Merivale Manor has been transformed into elegant motel and apartment accommodation. Less than 200 metres to central Merivale with its premier shopping, restaurants, cafes and bars.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 8

Christchurch to Kaikoura

The drive north from Christchurch to Kaikoura takes you through the rolling hills of North Canterbury's major wine region, the Waipara Valley. Allow time for a detour and visit Hanmer Springs for a dip in the mineral hot pools. Continue on and cross the Hawkswood Range before descending to the spectacular Kaikoura coastline - where the road hugs the ocean for the last leg of the drive.

Waipara region

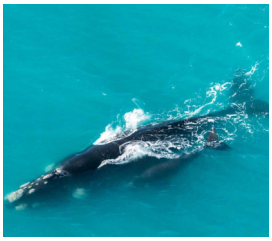
Located just a 45-minute drive north of Christchurch, the sunny Waipara Valley is North Canterbury’s premier boutique wine region, famous for its world-class Pinot Noir and aromatic Riesling. Nestled between rolling limestone hills, this microclimate offers travelers the perfect stopover to indulge in vineyard long lunches at iconic cellar doors like Black Estate or Pegasus Bay. If time allows, cycle along scenic vineyard trails, explore local artisan olive groves and truffle farms, or take a historic ride on the Weka Pass Railway through dramatic limestone gorges.

Your accommodation: Kaikoura Boutique Hotel

Kaikoura Boutique Hotel sits on the Esplanade overlooking Kaikoura's waterfront, just a short walk from tourist attractions, shops and cafes. The hotel has been lovingly refurbished with modern décor and a uniquely New Zealand design.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 9



30 Minute Whale Watch Explorer with Wings over Whales Kaikoura

In a typical 30 minute flight you will see the majestic Sperm Whale preparing for his next dive and up to 500 Dusky Dolphins cavorting with each other. On occasion, sightings include Southern Right, Humpback, Fin, Sei, Brydes, Pilot, Southern Bottlenose and the mighty Blue Whales. You may also spot Hectors, Risso's, Southern Right Whale Dolphins, and Orca, although these are all less frequent visitors to the area. Gain an aerial perspective of this fantastic marine environment in a high-winged aircraft with optimal, unobstructed viewing.

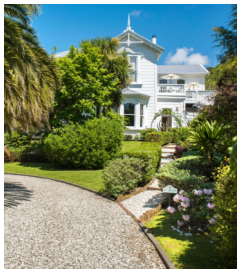
Kaikoura to Picton

Today follow the coast to Picton, located at the top of the South Island. As you leave Kaikoura you'll take in the spectacular shoreline and keep a lookout for native wildlife as you go. Stop to view adult fur seals at Ohau Point, and take a short stroll along the oceanside walkway. Continuing on, you'll have the ocean on one side and the Kaikoura ranges on the other before traversing the dry hills of Marlborough, New Zealand's largest wine-producing region. Visit one of the vineyards surrounding Blenheim for a wine tasting or a gourmet lunch before beginning the final leg of your journey to Picton.

Your accommodation: Sennen House, Picton

This magnificent 2-storey villa is one of Picton's original colonial homesteads. Extensively restored, Sennen House offers guests a truly unique accommodation experience, set in 5 acres of National Trust protected native forest and grounds, yet only a short stroll to Picton's restaurants, shops, ferries and foreshore.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 10

Marlborough Sounds

The Marlborough Sounds, located at the north-eastern tip of New Zealand's South Island, is a captivating region of sunken river valleys. Spanning 4,000 km² between Tasman and Cloudy Bays, this diverse landscape of bush-clad mountains and clear waters is a haven for marine life and seabirds, including dolphins, seals, penguins, fantails, bellbirds, and wood pigeons. Sparsely populated, many of its secluded houses and resorts are accessible only by boat, making it an ideal escape. The main sounds – Queen Charlotte, Pelorus, Kenepuru, and Tory Channel – carve out a spectacular coastline and separate Arapawa Island from the mainland.
Indulge your senses with the region's culinary delights – from fresh Greenshell mussels harvested directly from the Sounds and perfectly paired with world-famous Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc, to an array of local delicacies. Whether you seek exhilarating water sports, tranquil walks, or simply the chance to unwind amidst spectacular scenery, the Marlborough Sounds promise an unforgettable and deeply captivating experience.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Queen Charlotte Sound Cruise and Walk

Sit back and relax as Cougar Line cruises the idyllic Queen Charlotte Sound taking you to Resolution Bay for the start of your 3 hour Queen Charlotte track experience. After you disembark at Resolution Bay, enjoy the gentle walk which traverses native forest over a low saddle offering a spectacular vantage point for the photographer. The gradual descent curls along the shoreline to historic Furneaux Lodge. From here you cruise back to Picton. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information click here.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Seafood Odyssea Cruise with Marlborough Tour Company

Enjoy the sights and sounds of the Queen Charlotte Sound with seemingly endless bays and coves to explore and different scenery around each corner. Seafood Odyssea Cruise offers a unique range of sightseeing, birdlife and wildlife. Learn about the Marlborough Sounds area, the local seafoods grown and enjoy a fabulous seafood tasting on board.

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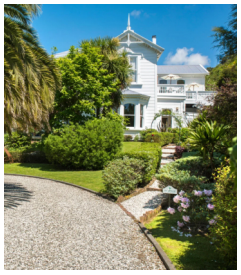
Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 11

Interislander Ferry Picton to Wellington with exclusive access to the Premium Plus Lounge

The 92 km journey between Picton and Wellington takes around 3 hours and has been described as 'one of the most beautiful ferry rides in the world'. Around one hour of the cruise takes you through the Marlborough Sounds. This region of bush covered mountains, small islands, crystal clear waters and secluded bays is a true photographic opportunity. From the Cook Strait spectacular views of the Kaikoura Ranges on the South Island can be enjoyed and dolphins and many sea birds are often seen. After crossing the strait you approach Wellington Harbour and pass many interesting points such as Pencarrow Head on top of which is New Zealand's oldest lighthouse (1859). Red Rocks is home to a seal colony and Oterangi Bay is the site which recorded the countries highest ever wind speed of 268 kph (167 mph).
When you're not out on the deck enjoying the amazing views, you can retreat to the exclusive premium plus lounge which is the most comfortable and relaxing way to travel across the Cook Strait. You'll enjoy complimentary beverages, light snacks, lunch or breakfast, internet access, magazines and newspapers and the most comfortable seating, so you can sit back and enjoy the journey.

Collect Rental Car

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Wellington to Martinborough

Crossing the Remutaka Ranges from the capital city delivers you to the agricultural region of the Wairarapa. This fertile and productive region produces many crops and in more recent times the Martinborough region had developed into a boutique wine growing region.

Your accommodation: Parehua Resort Martinborough

Bordering Martinborough's Pinot Noir vineyards, Parehua brings an expansive country estate feel to Wairarapa wine country. Standalone cottages set within manicured lawns and woodland gardens offer private verandas and light-filled interiors. Steps from village cellar doors, it provides a peaceful, self-contained base for exploring at an effortless pace.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 12

Pinot to Palliser Guided Tour with Martinborough Wine Tours

This tour combines the picturesque countryside of the southeastern coastline of the North Island with Martinborough village and wine tasting. After a drive through the village, drive through the country-side to the rugged and spectacular Palliser Bay coastline. The bay is one of New Zealand’s most important early Maori settled areas. Driving along the dynamic coast you will pass beach terraces raised by past earthquakes, see the old abandoned homes falling into the sea due to wave action, and view the precariously placed rock formation known as Kupe’s Sail.
Then go on to Cape Palliser lighthouse where you can climb up to the lighthouse and enjoy spectacular views of Palliser Bay. Before and after the lighthouse stop, visit the seal colonies and enjoy the antics of the young seal pups.

Your accommodation: Parehua Resort Martinborough

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Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 13

Martinborough to Napier

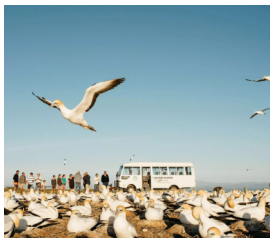
Leaving the Wairarapa you pass through the Manawatu Gorge and into the countryside of the Hawkes Bay and towards the city of Napier. Napier, the city by the sea, is renowned for its 1930s Art Deco architecture, events such as the Art Deco Weekend in February, stately Norfolk pines, surrounding wineries and local fresh produce. Supported by a Mediterranean climate and over 2,200 hours of sunshine a year this popular year-round destination boasts a vibrant cafe culture amongst the splendour of the Art Deco buildings.
Around 30 cafes are within walking distance of the central city area, while Ahuriri, just over Bluff Hill, is home to a further cluster of up market establishments. Marine Parade overlooks the Pacific Ocean and out towards Cape Kidnappers , home to the world's largest mainland gannet colony. A full day can be taken visiting Ocean Spa hot pools and swimming complex, the Hawke's Bay Museum and the National Aquarium of New Zealand.
A landmark of Napier is Bluff Hill, which is home for many Napier residents and provides views of the town, beaches of Perfume Point and Westshore and out towards Whirinaki. Bluff Hill also overlooks the Port of Napier, one of New Zealand's busiest ports, transporting timber, local fruit and meat products to worldwide destinations.
In 1931, New Zealand's greatest natural disaster struck Hawke's Bay. At 10.47am on Tuesday February 3rd, an earthquake of magnitude Richter 7.8 struck. In a minute and a half, in two separate shocks, the centre of Napier was almost totally destroyed. Fires quickly broke out and reduced to ashes or gutted what the tremors had left standing. Damage in Hastings was also devastating, although the fires were contained. Wairoa and the smaller towns to the south as far as Dannevirke were affected. There were 258 deaths - 162 in Napier, 93 in Hastings and 3 in Wairoa along with many injuries. The reconstruction of Napier and Hastings were costly but the benefit was two modern cities and the Ahuriri Lagoon, or Inner Harbour as it was usually known, was raised over 2 metres, creating the land, which Napier desperately needed to expand.

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 14



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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Hawkes Bay Half Day Wine Tour with Grape Escape

This wine tasting tour is designed for casual imbibers and wine aficionados. Meet like-minded people and share an appreciation of Hawke's Bay's fantastic wines. Taste great wines made with passion and learn of the areas unique growing conditions. Take home outstanding wines and wonderful memories. Join a fun filled wine tasting afternoon in the sun driving through absolutely stunning scenery. Meet like-minded people and share an appreciation of this region's fantastic wine. Visit four to five wineries and enjoy a cheese platter on the grounds of the Ngatarawa Vineyard beside the lily pond.

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.

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 Café. 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

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Meals included: Breakfast

Day 15

Napier to Taupo

Crossing the Ahimanawa Ranges you arrive into the town of Taupo sitting on New Zealand's largest lake, Lake Taupo - a gigantic volcanic caldera formed during one of the world’s largest ever eruptions. Just north of the Taupo are the Huka Falls and a short detour to view is advised. The Huka Jet can get you much closer with a thrilling jet boat ride. Nearby Craters of the Moon is a geothermal reserve with great walking tracks around its many boiling pools and steaming vents. Taupo is a lively place with many shops, bars and cafes all catering for the traveller and visitor. A whole host of activities can be undertaken here such as bungy jumping, sky diving, fishing for trout in the lake and rivers, kayaking, sailing, horse riding and walking and hiking to name but a few.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Maori Rock Carving Cruise

Sit back and relax in luxury bean bags on board the yacht Barbary as you enjoy a scenic sail across Lake Taupo to the 10-metre high Maori rock art, only accessible by boat. You're guaranteed amazing photo opportunities as you experience one of life's postcard moments on this Maori tour. Glide across a smooth lake as you soak up the warming sun or go for a swim before you enjoy free light refreshments at the rock carvings. If you're looking for a little more activity you can help hoist the sails or take a turn at the wheel. Taupo's Maori rock carvings may look like the remains of a 1,000-year-old Maori village, but these rock carvings were created in the late 70s by local artists lead by John Randall. Duration of cruise is 2 to 2.5 hours.

Huka Falls Jet Boat Ride

The Huka Jet is 30 minutes of pure fun and exhilaration, skimming close to cliffs, sliding past trees, feeling the adrenalin of full 360 degree spins. The excitement continues right up to the base of the foaming Huka Falls, where you get a spectacular water level view to New Zealand's most visited natural attraction. Nothing compares to watching 220,000 litres per second tumbling over the cliff face towards you. The water from the mighty Huka Falls runs down the Waikato River through a series of Hydro Power Stations. You'll get a view of the Wairakei Geothermal Power Station in the comfort of a powerful Chevrolet V8 jet boat. This unique Geothermal Power Station uses underground geothermal activity to produce hot steamy water. The Waikato Rivers beautiful environment is varied and unique and is New Zealand's longest river flowing north from our largest lake, Lake Taupō. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information please see here.

Your accommodation: Chalet Eiger

Situated above picturesque Acacia Bay overlooking Lake Taupo, Chalet Eiger's accommodation is set in a tranquil environment where each guest room has full views of the magnificent lake, Mount Tauhara and Taupo town.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 16

Taupo to Auckland

The drive from Taupo to Auckland takes you through the heart of the Waikato and its rich agricultural land. New Zealand's longest river, the Waikato River, guides you through the art and craft stores of Tirau and the township of Cambridge.
Auckland City is New Zealand's largest, with a population of around 1.5 million people (about one third of the national population), spread over approximately 60 square kilometres. There is somewhere for every visitor to feel comfortable and right at home as each suburb has its own unique style and atmosphere, from the vibrant and trendy fashion and cuisine found on Ponsonby and Parnell Roads to the breathtaking native bush and beaches of the West Coast. One of the world's great cities Auckland is full of life and opportunities to explore are endless.

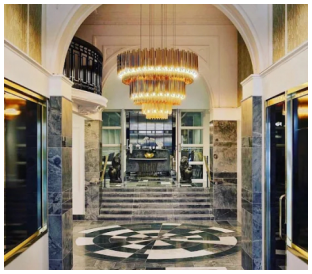
SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Harbour Sailing Dinner Cruise with Explore

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: 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'.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 17

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 commentated scenic drive, learning about the Island’s history, geography, people, and culture from your knowledgeable local guide.

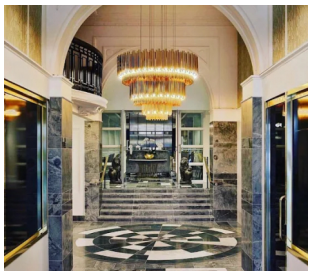
Fullers Ferry Waiheke Island to Auckland

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: 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'.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 18

Depart Auckland today

Explore more of vibrant Auckland city 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:	Nationwide Self Drive
Starts:	Queenstown
Finishes:	Auckland
Tour length:	18
Accomodation:	Boutique Lodges & Hotels
Car/transport type:	

Accommodation summary

Day 1	The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter
Day 2	The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter
Day 3	Edgewater Wanaka
Day 4	Edgewater Wanaka
Day 5	Legacy Te Waonui Hotel Franz Josef
Day 6	Merivale Manor House
Day 7	Merivale Manor House
Day 8	Kaikoura Boutique Hotel
Day 9	Sennen House, Picton
Day 10	Sennen House, Picton
Day 11	Parehua Resort Martinborough
Day 12	Parehua Resort Martinborough
Day 13	Art Deco Masonic Hotel
Day 14	Art Deco Masonic Hotel
Day 15	Chalet Eiger
Day 16	Fable Auckland
Day 17	Fable Auckland