



Accessible Auckland to Wellington Highlights

Travel through the heart of the North Island on this short 'highlights' New Zealand self-drive tour. From Auckland journey south through the Waikato countryside to Rotorua, the Maori culture capital of New Zealand. It's then on to the Art Deco city of Napier in the Hawkes Bay, home to New Zealand's oldest vineyards. The final leg of your whirlwind tour of the North Island takes you past sheep farms and wineries as you travel through the Wairarapa region to your final destination, the capital city of Wellington.



Starts in: Auckland
Finishes in: Wellington
Length: 8days / 7nights
Accommodation: Hotel 4 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: Late model rental cars
Includes: Unlimited kms
Includes: Airport & ferry terminal rental car fees
Includes: Comprehensive tour pack (detailed itinerary, driving instructions, map/guidebooks, brochures)
Included activity: Private Transfer Auckland Airport to Auckland accommodation with Tourcorp
Included activity: All Blacks Experience
Included activity: Europcar Rental Car Delivery

Included activity: Martinborough Half Day Wine Tour with Martinborough Wine Tours

Includes: Fully inclusive rental car insurance (excess may apply)
Includes: GPS navigation
Includes: Additional drivers
Includes: 24/7 support while touring New Zealand

Included activity: Electronic Travel Guide and In-Country Support App
Included activity: Auckland Sky Tower Admission
Included activity: Te Pā Tū Evening Maori Cultural Experience - Dinner Included
: 7 breakfasts



Day 1



Private Transfer Auckland Airport to Auckland Accommodation

You will be met at the Auckland airport by the driver and transferred to your Auckland accommodation.

Welcome to Auckland

Auckland, New Zealand's self-proclaimed "City of Sails" is the country's largest metro area. Resting between the Pacific Ocean and the Tasman Sea, this urban paradise has something for everyone. Surrounded by native bush, rainforests, and an abundance of beaches, Auckland is a playground for both the city savvy and those with an eye for adventure. Explore the central museums and galleries on foot, or get out onto the water to experience the best views of the city.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Harbour Sailing Cruise with Explore

Enjoy the City of Sails from the water on a relaxed harbour sailing yacht. This cruise offers a uniquely local experience experiencing the harbour under sail with a small vessel with an intimate and engaging atmosphere. View the stunning city sights while sailing on the inner Waitemata Harbour. Sail where the wind takes us while enjoying Auckland's city highlights; including sailing under the Harbour Bridge and other well-known landmarks along the harbour's edge. The crew's local knowledge will give you the best harbour sailing experience Auckland has to offer. Become the crew and help participate with the sailing experience take the helm while you carve through the water, or if you prefer just sit back and relax above deck.

All Blacks Experience

See what it takes to make, shape and be an All Black. Experience first-hand the excitement and emotion of game day. Discover the stories behind some of world rugby's most famous players, moments and matches.

This guided experience introduces you to the game of rugby before being lead through state-of-the-art displays combining sound, images, interactive technology and hands-on activities. Discover New Zealand's deep passion for our national sport, experience the full force of the All Blacks haka, tackle interactive zones where you can try out your kicking, catching, line-out and accuracy skills against legendary All Blacks.

Auckland Sky Tower Admission

Standing at 328 metres (just over 1000 feet) - the Sky Tower is the tallest man-made structure in New Zealand and offers panoramic views of the Auckland landscape. Travel in the glass-fronted lift to one of three spectacular viewing platforms, or for a little more excitement do a SkyWalk - an outside loop around the pergola 192 metres (just over 600 feet) above ground. If you're really bold, Take the quick way down and SkyJump off the tower - a controlled free fall to the base.

Inside, the Sky Lounge offers coffee and light meals while the iconic Orbit Restaurant is Auckland's only 360 degree revolving dining experience.

Your accommodation: Airedale Boutique Suites

Airedale Boutique Suites Auckland is located on a landmark site on Queen Street in the heart of Auckland City. This superb art deco style hotel is conveniently located in the city's vibrant cultural, shopping and central business district.



Day 2





5 door 2WD SUV
Air Conditioning and Bluetooth
Engine: 2 litre
Automatic
Passengers: 5 passengers
Luggage Space: 4 large bags
Maximum Excess/ Liability: NZD\$0

Auckland to Rotorua

The drive south from Auckland takes you past the Bombay Hills and into the rolling farmland and rich dairy pastures of the Waikato. The Bombay Hills mark the outer boundary of greater Auckland area and it's here you turn inland to central Waikato. You'll soon go through the town of Matamata where you can visit the fully intact Hobbiton film set used in the shooting of the Lord of The Rings and Hobbit trilogies. Continuing on, you'll pass several small farming communities before telltale signs of steam and other geothermal activity signal your arrival into Rotorua.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Hobbiton Movie Set tour from Shires Rest

Become immersed in the The Lord of the Rings and Hobbit films when you visit the actual Hobbiton movie set. Located just outside of Matamata in the heart of the lush Waikato farming region, your tour will begin with a drive through a picturesque sheep farm. You'll then be taken through Hobbit Holes, the Green Dragon Inn, the Mill and the Party Tree while your guide shares behind-the-scenes tales and insight into the making of the films. Spend time wandering through Bagshot Row before being led inside a Hobbit Hole to view the detailed interiors, designed to provide an authentic glimpse into the dwelling of a Hobbit.

Your accommodation: Novotel Lakeside Rotorua

Novotel Lakeside Rotorua is a 4.5 star property located on the picturesque shores of Lake Rotorua and set in park surroundings. Just minutes from the city centre, cafes and restaurants plus the numerous tourist attractions including water activities on the lake, a golf course, museum, and thermal reserves.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 3



Explore Rotorua

Peppered with natural hot springs, boiling mud pools and steaming geysers, Rotorua sits within one of the world's most active volcanic regions. Geothermal landmarks aside, this city of sulphur has a rich indigenous history. Home to several prominent Maori tribes, a visit to one of the Maori Villages should be high on your agenda, as should an excursion to the Polynesian Spa for an invigorating soak in its natural mineral hot springs.

Spike your adrenaline at Velocity Valley Adventure Park on stomach-dropping attractions such as static skydiving, or a giant swing reaching 130 km per hour. Alternatively, head up the Rotorua Gondola for soaring lake views, and ride the luge at night for an extra thrill.

Fans of Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit should drive to nearby Matamata and experience the actual movie set 'Hobbiton'. Make the most of your time in Rotorua with an excursion through the Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland, one of the area's most colourful volcanic attractions.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - National Kiwi Hatchery Tour

The National Kiwi Hatchery Tour is a special opportunity to gain insight into and view this highly regarded conservation centre. Developed with the visitor experience in mind, the hatchery boasts special viewing opportunities and is hosted by kiwi expert guides who ensure guests leave fully informed and all questions answered. Learn all about New Zealand's intriguing national icon and the efforts of the kiwi husbandry team, see and discover what it takes to hatch and rear chicks, and if you're lucky see baby chicks in person!

Te Pā Tū Evening Maori Cultural Experience

New Zealand's Most Awarded Cultural Attraction, presenting Te Pā Tū. Feast on song, drama, tradition, and divine seasonal kai (cuisine) within the forest Pā (village) blanketed by towering Tawa trees, blazing bonfires, and a forest-formed amphitheatre. Te Pā Tū shares Māori history, traditions, and cultural aspirations across 4-hours of celebration and feasting. These events change with each season of the maramataka, the Māori lunar calendar.

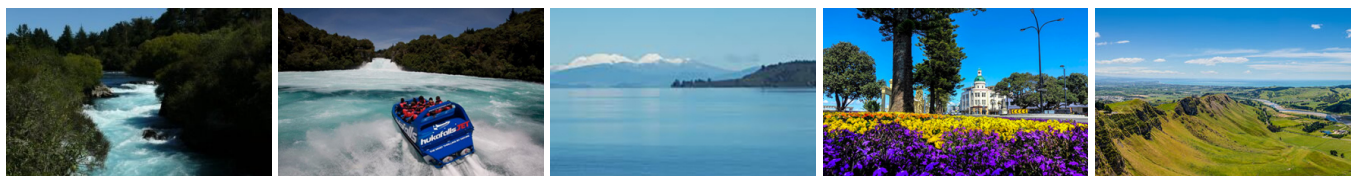
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Meals included: Breakfast



Day 4



Rotorua to Napier

This drive will take you through the thermal region just south of Rotorua. Home to a plethora of unique geothermal attractions including boiling mud pits, natural hot springs and steaming geysers, this area is a must do before you move on to Napier. Notable attractions are Wai-O-Tapu, Waimangu and Craters of the Moon.

Continue on to Taupo and marvel at the lake, a giant crater formed following a volcanic eruption in the year 180 CE. As you approach the city, be sure to stop at Huka Falls to view the spectacular sight of hundreds of cubic metres of water spilling every second down the narrow 11 metre drop.

For an extra thrill take a jet-boat ride to the base of the falls. Leaving Taupo, follow the road as it climbs the rugged Ahimanawa Range before descending back down the Pacific Coast to art deco Napier.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - 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.

Your accommodation: Scenic Hotel Te Pania

Scenic Hotel Te Pania offers 4-star accommodation of a truly international standard. The hotel's slender, curved form echoes the shape of the bay. Enjoy sweeping views out over the water from a premium waterfront location on Marine Parade.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 5



Explore Napier and the Hawke's Bay

With its Mediterranean climate and Art Deco style, Hawke's Bay is an attractive holiday prospect. As the nation's first winemaking region, a visit to one of its 30 wineries is a must. A trip to Mission Estate touted as the birthplace of NZ wine can't be missed. For the truly enthused head out on a tour of the vines. Those into Gatsby will enjoy the chance to view prominent Art Deco landmarks on a 1930s Vintage Car Tour. Passengers will spend just over an hour learning about the history of the city's architecture including the Napier Municipal Theatre, one of the top ten Art Deco Buildings in the world. If you're after some fresh air, hire a bike and take your pick of one of over 200km of cycling trails or head on down to one of the many beaches that ring the area. Ocean or Waimarama beach are good choices and both are patrolled by surf lifeguards during the summer. Indulge in some local produce and head out on a cheese, chocolate, honey or orchard tour.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Art Deco Trust Guided Morning Walk

Experience Napier's fascinating heritage created by the dramatic story of this city's rebirth in the vibrant 1930s. In February 1931, Napier was levelled by earthquake and fire but was rebuilt in the depths of the Great Depression in just two years. Nowhere else in the world can you see such a concentration of buildings in the styles of the 1930s: Art Deco, Spanish Mission, and Stripped Classical.

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Meals included: Breakfast



Day 6



Napier to Martinborough

As you leave the rolling countryside of the Hawke's Bay you'll be greeted with some of the country's richest dairy farmland in the Manawatu Gorge. Continue on through the Wairarapa region and stop in the Pukaha Mount Bruce Wildlife Centre, where you can see some of New Zealand native animals. Take another break in Masterson, and visit the interactive Woolshed Museum to learn about sheep farming in New Zealand. As you drive south, a visit to historic Greytown is a must-do. Take in the restored Victorian buildings and make time for a cup of tea at one of its quaint cafes. Leaving state highway 2 you will cross over the Ruamahanga River into Martinborough wine country your destination for the day.

Martinborough Half Day Wine Tour with Martinborough Wine Tours

Visit wonderful vineyards such as Te Kairangi Wines, Tirohana Estate, Cabbage Tree Vineyard and Martinborough Vineyard on this half day tour of the premium wine region of Martinborough. Taste the wines, learn about the development of the region, its people and characters from knowledgeable guides.

Your accommodation: The Martinborough Hotel

At the Martinborough Hotel, indulge in the elegant surroundings of this 1882 building. There are nine Verandah Rooms, at the top of the grand flight of stairs and seven spacious Garden Rooms finished in a restful simple country style.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 7



Martinborough to Wellington City

Today you will cross the Rimutaka Ranges as you make your way to New Zealand's capital city, Wellington. Often compared to Melbourne, Wellington is vibrant cultural hub. Home to the nation's centre of government. Legislation happens in the aptly named 'Beehive,' an executive wing attached to the Houses of Parliament. At one kilometre squared, the city centre (easily traversed on foot) has an international feel and is peppered with underground art shows, alleyway cafes and New York style delis. Take in the boardwalk view as you stroll to Te Papa Museum or indulge your cinematic side exploring Weta Workshop, the Oscar Award winning design studio for Lord Of The Rings. For a taste of vintage fashion, spend some time (and dollars!) on Cuba Street browsing the boutiques. Work off last night's dinner with a cycling tour of Oriental Bay and undo your good work with a Hokey Pokey ice-cream in the sun. For those heading further down, the capital is where you board the ferry crossing the Cook Strait to the South Island.

Wellington

Wellington, home to New Zealand's centre of government has a largely cosmopolitan feel. Often referred to as 'mini-Melbourne', this (self described) windy city is a melting pot of art, culture, food and fashion. Quirky laneway bars, underground art shows, and hipster eateries make up its inner city vibe, while a host of sandy beaches outside the urban bustle bring a cheerful holiday feel. Take a turn on the boardwalk en-route to Te Papa, New Zealand's national museum or catch a historic cable car from Lambton Quay and soak up the city sights. Wander the boutiques on Cuba St and check out the aptly named 'Beehive' off Parliament House. Play hobbit for day and book a tour through Weta Workshop, the Oscar Award winning design studio for Lord Of The Rings. If eating is your thing, drive an hour out of town to Martinborough and experience some of the region's best food and wine. For those interested in New Zealand's native species, a trip to Zealandia is a must, the world's first fully fenced eco-sanctuary. Then kick off your evening in style - search 'Metro Eats' to choose from a plethora of the city's best restaurants to dine.

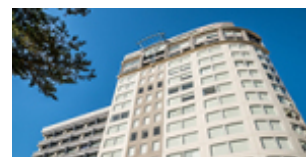
SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Wētā Workshop Experience

The Weta Cave mini-museum brings you face to face with some of the characters, props and displays from your favourite movies, including The Hobbit and Lord of the Rings movies. Visit Weta Cave Workshop and get up close to the props, weapons and costumes created for The Lord of the Rings, Power Rangers, The Great Wall, Avatar, District 9, and more. See artists at work on the tour stage and peek through windows that look directly into the Workshop. Hear stories from the Weta Workshop crew. Many have worked on the films themselves! Weta Workshop is also known for its extraordinary miniatures and bigatures created for films like The Lord of the Rings, Furious 7, The Legend of Zorro, and Master and Commander and discover Weta Workshop's latest jaw-dropping creations.

Your accommodation: Bolton Hotel Wellington

The Bolton Hotel offers contemporary apartment-style accommodation in the heart of Wellington. Just steps from the Parliament buildings and central business district, Bolton Hotel is conveniently close to the best of the city's shops, cafes and restaurants and is within walking distance of Wellington's vibrant waterfront.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 8

Return your vehicle to Wellington Airport

Explore more of Wellington before dropping your rental car at the airport depot and continuing your onward journey.

Tour details

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|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Departures: | Daily |
| Tour type: | North Island Self Drive |
| Starts: | Auckland |
| Finishes: | Wellington |
| Tour length: | 8 |
| Accommodation: | Hotel 4 star |
| Car/transport type: | |

Included activities

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| Includes | Private airport transfers |
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Accommodation summary

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| Day 1 | Airedale Boutique Suites |
| Day 2 | Novotel Lakeside Rotorua |
| Day 3 | Novotel Lakeside Rotorua |
| Day 4 | Scenic Hotel Te Pania |
| Day 5 | Scenic Hotel Te Pania |
| Day 6 | The Martinborough Hotel |
| Day 7 | Bolton Hotel Wellington |