

Pacific Escapade

18 days Auckland to Christchurch

Bay of Islands. Photo Credit: Northland NZ

Price includes:

- 17 nights accommodation in the style of your choice
- Breakfasts daily, 1 lunch & 3 dinners
- Te Po Maori cultural experience with traditional hangi (feast)
- 16 days car rental including full insurance, unlimited kms & GPS
- Domestic flight Rotorua to Christchurch
- Private airport transfers on arrival & departure
- Cape Brett & Hole in the Rock cruise
- Te Puia Thermal Reserve
- Akaroa Wildlife cruise
- Lake Tekapo & Church of the Good Shepherd
- Aoraki, Mt Cook National Park
- Tasman Glacier Explorer boat excursion
- Shotover Jet Boat ride
- Doubtful Sound Wilderness Excursion
- World-heritage Westland National Park
- Fox & Franz Josef Glaciers
- Punakaiki Rocks & Blowhole
- Award-winning TransAlpine train journey through the Southern Alps

Itinerary:

DAY 1: Arrive Auckland

Welcome to Auckland, the City of Sails. On completion of arrival formalities, you will be transferred to your chosen accommodation. The remainder of the day is at leisure to explore what the 'City of Sails' has to offer.

B&B: Great Ponsonby Art Hotel

Hotel: The Heritage Auckland

DAY 2: Hibiscus Coast, Paihia

(B)

Collect your rental car this morning and travel north over the harbour bridge & through the northern suburbs of Auckland, with the beachside homes of the Hibiscus Coast to the east & the bush-clad Waitakere Ranges to the west. Enjoy spectacular scenery of native forests & sub-tropical bush as you make your way to Paihia in the Bay of Islands, a seaside town nestled on the foreshore of this National Maritime Park. This afternoon, enjoy a cruise to Cape Brett & the famous 'Hole-in-the-Rock'.

B&B: Chalet Romantica (2 nights)

Hotel: Copthorne Waitangi Resort (2 nights)

DAY 3: At leisure in the Bay of Islands

(B)

A free day to enjoy all that this natural playground has to offer. Swim with dolphins, see whales up-close, enjoy a day's big game fishing, play a round of golf or take a trip to Cape Reinga, the northernmost point in New Zealand ... the choices are endless.

DAY 4: Mataranka, Coromandel Peninsula

(B)

Head south today and stop at the Mataranka wine village with its markets and boutique shops. Join the Pacific Coast Highway that links Auckland with the Coromandel Peninsula, a beautiful rugged area fringed with dozens of excellent beaches and a place where many local kiwis go to escape the hustle and hype of city life. It is also home to many arts and crafts people who seek an alternative lifestyle.

B&B: Rewa Lodge (2 nights)

Hotel: Mercure Puka Park Lodge (2 nights)

DAY 5: At leisure to explore the Coromandel beaches

(B)

There are many beautiful places in the world and the Coromandel Peninsula is an unspoilt haven. Today you may choose to visit and enjoy the stunning beaches of Cathedral Cove and Hahei or dig your own spa pool using the thermal waters in the sand at Hot Water Beach.

DAY 6: Bay of Plenty, Rotorua

(B)

Travel along the Bay of Plenty coastline to the popular beachside towns of Tauranga & Mt Maunganui. From here, travel inland across the volcanic plateau to the geothermal city of Rotorua, an area that has enchanted visitors from around the world for more than 160 years.

B&B: Koura Lodge (2 nights)

Hotel: Amora Okawa Bay Resort (2 nights)

DAY 7: Discover Rotorua

(B,D)

Free time to explore Rotorua today. You may like to visit the Agrodome or take a gondola ride to the top of Mt Ngongotaha for spectacular views of Rotorua. Later this afternoon visit Te Puia geothermal area to view the boiling mudpools and cascading Pohutu geyser. This evening experience Te Po, Te Puia's cultural experience. It is a feast of cultural storytelling, entertainment and Maori kai (indigenous food). After a formal Maori welcome, relax and enjoy a performance that includes beautiful songs, the stirring haka and the twirling poi dance. After dinner you will be transported by people movers to enjoy the spectacular lighting of the Whakarewarewa Geothermal Valley.

DAY 8: Fly Rotorua to Christchurch, Akaroa

(B)

This morning, board your flight to Christchurch. On arrival, collect your rental car & drive to Akaroa, a quaint seaside village on the Banks Peninsula with a strong French heritage. Settled in the early 1860's, it has retained its French flavour through its street names & architecture.

B&B: Banks House (2 nights)

Hotel: Akaroa Village Inn (2 nights)

