

2018-2019

# NEW ZEALAND

## Inspiring Journeys

Small group  
boutique  
journeys

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Our signature  
fully-guided holiday  
experiences

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## Short Breaks

4-7 day breaks  
with your choice of  
accommodation

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# FIRST LIGHT TRAVEL



Your South Pacific Travel Specialists

Coromandel Peninsula



## The Endless Shores

11 DAYS | WELLINGTON TO AUCKLAND | NZNI

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Discover

- Exciting Wellington city
- Magical Waitomo Glowworm Grotto

#### Explore

- The expansive shores of Lake Taupo
- Lush forests of Tongariro National Park
- Rotorua's healing mineral springs

#### Immerse

- Enjoy a traditional Māori experience in Rotorua 🇳🇿
- Learn about the history of European settlers in Russell
- Guided walk through the sacred Waipoua Forest

#### Relax

- Cruise the beautiful Bay of Islands
- Stay in eco-friendly tree hut chalets
- Swim at pristine Pauanui Beach

#### Taste

- A Māori Hangi with the Tamaki family 🇳🇿
- 10 full buffet breakfasts B
- 1 Highlight Dinner HD
- 4 dinners with wine DW
- 1 Farewell Dinner FD

Embrace the Hongi touch of your gracious Māori hosts, whose enduring relationship with this unspoilt land is revealed on this Inspiring Journey to some of New Zealand's most mesmerising natural wonders, from the luminous glow of Waitomo to the fantasy-land of the Shire.

#### Day 1: Welcome to Wellington

Ease in to the culinary capital of New Zealand – an Inspiring Journey through New Zealand's North Island, delving into the rich Māori culture, island sanctuaries and volcanic landscapes of this island nation. The afternoon is yours at leisure to breathe in the aromas of Wellington's unique coffee and craft brew culture, or wander around the waterfront to Oriental Bay before meeting your Travel Director and fellow travellers for a welcome drink and dinner. **Hotel:** Sofitel, Wellington, 2 nights. DW

#### Day 2: Wellington Free Time

Spend the day at leisure exploring New Zealand's capital on your terms. Enjoy a panoramic view of the city and harbour from the Mount Victoria Lookout. Visit Te Papa Museum of New Zealand, to gain fascinating insight into this country's unique history. Take a ride on Wellington's famous Cable Car from Lambton Quay all the way up to Kelburn, ambling back down to the city through the picturesque Botanic Garden. Or go behind the scenes and experience a world of imagination and special effects at Weta Cave – the artistic geniuses behind The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit trilogies. Your Travel Director will assist you to make the most of

your free time and help you book all your chosen optional experiences. This evening is yours to indulge in the culinary delights of Wellington. Visit one of the markets or perhaps head to Courtenay Place to dine at one of the tucked-away bars or quirky cafés. B

#### Day 3: Wellington – Taupo

Drive along the rugged Kapiti Coast – winding past sun-kissed beaches, lush forests and the dairy farms of the Manawatu to catch a glimpse of the three active volcanic peaks of Tongariro National Park, rising starkly from the surrounding plateau of tussock and near-desert. From the volatile earth's crust came Lake Taupo, your next stop and New Zealand's largest lake which now lies peaceful within the caldera of a volcano. Before arriving at your hotel, stop in to view raging Huka Falls and pass the Wairakei Geothermal Power Station. **Hotel:** Hilton Hotel, Taupo. B DW

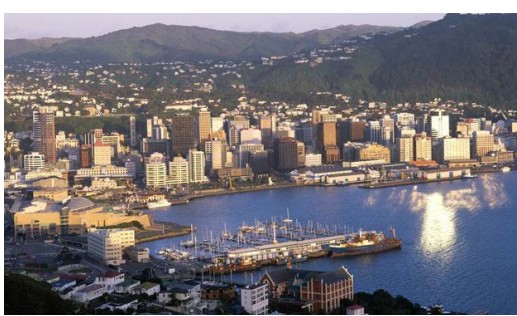
#### Day 4: Taupo – Rotorua

Enjoy a ramble around the pretty lakeside town of Taupo before heading to nearby Rotorua. 🇳🇿 Here you'll delve into the fascinating culture and rituals of the Māori people against the backdrop of some of New Zealand's most dramatic volcanic landscapes – sizzling geysers, bubbling mud pools and colourful rocks alongside which



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the local Māori people have lived for centuries. Enjoy unique insights into local customs like the Hongi greeting, as well as learn some traditional words, before a Highlight Dinner, a traditional Māori Hangi cooked in the ground using geothermal steam. Hotel: Princes Gate Hotel, Rotorua, 2 nights. B HD

### Day 5: Rotorua

Ascend to the Redwoods Treewalk for a bird's-eye view of these redwood giants. Then, come face-to-face with New Zealand's extraordinarily unique wildlife at Rainbow Springs Nature Park and explore the natural heritage of these Pacific islands, even spotting a shy kiwi or two if you're lucky.

🚫 Your day concludes with a visit to Whakarewarewa Living Village, where you'll enjoy insights into the lives of the Māori people and the special bond they share with this land. B

### Day 6: Rotorua – Coromandel

The iridescent cave walls of Waitomo Caves are your first stop today as you navigate the dark depths that provide sanctuary to millions of glowworms. See the beauty of Footwhistle Cave and dramatic cave formations before heading back to 'Living Earth' and through the rolling farmlands of Waikato to Coromandel and Puka Park Resort. Set deep within the lush native bush on the slopes of Mount Pauanui, your sanctuary tonight is in Tree Hut Chalets. Hotel: Grand Mercure Puka Park, Coromandel. B DW

### Day 7: Coromandel - Auckland

A relaxed start to your day as you travel to the City of Sails. Ease into laid-back Auckland vibes after a sightseeing tour of the city, with your afternoon at leisure to explore on your own terms. Walk along the picturesque promenade of Mission Bay. Catch a glimpse of the volcanic Rangitoto Island. Or perhaps catch a ferry to Devonport for a delicious fresh seafood lunch. Hotel: Sofitel, Auckland. B

### Day 8: Auckland – Bay of Islands

The golden sands of Orewa along the scenic Hibiscus Coast is your first stop today, before continuing to the lush native forest of Waipoua, home to the largest Kauri tree in existence, Tane Mahuta, which for over 2,000 years has towered over the forest floor. Venturing deep into the forest, a Māori guide explains the heritage and fascinating legends of these mighty trees. Finally, head to your waterfront resort in the subtropical Bay of Islands and enjoy a delicious dinner together. Hotel: Copthorne Resort, Bay of Islands, 2 nights. B DW

### Day 9: Bay of Islands

Wake up in paradise. The picture-perfect setting of golden beaches, azure waters and historic villages is yours to explore today as you set off by ferry across the harbour to Russell, New Zealand's first permanent European settlement and sea port, for a guided tour into this town's fascinating settler and seafaring heritage. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure meandering through the town's beautiful art galleries and quaint streets, going on one of the many walking tours, or simply relaxing in historic surrounds. B

### Day 10: Bay of Islands - Auckland

The wind in your hair, set forth across the Bay of Islands, cruising to the Hole in the Rock. See historic Cape Brett along your exploration of some of the 165 islands in the bay, spending time in the pretty tourist town of Paihia to peruse the local craft shops, amble along the beachfront or just relax over a coffee with new friends. Tonight, celebrate your journey through New Zealand's picturesque North Island at a Farewell Dinner in Auckland. Hotel: Sofitel, Auckland. B FD

### Day 11: Depart Auckland

For now, it's a fond farewell to fellow travellers as your Inspiring Journey comes to an end this morning. B

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