

SMALL GROUP GUIDED TOURS. RATED #1 IN NZ!





16-DAY AMPLIFIED NEW ZEALAND TOUR

FIRSTLIGHTTRAVEL

S Our most popular trip is a 16 day itinerary jam-packed with New Zealand's top destinations and experiences. We'll take you to the scenic highlights of the North and South Islands where you'll discover golden beaches, majestic mountains, Māori culture, surreal landscapes and a big dose of adventure!

This small-group guided tour of the North and South Island will visit Coromandel, Rotorua, Taupo, Wellington, Kaikōura, Wanaka, Queenstown, Lake Tekapo (an International Dark Sky Reserve), and Franz Josef Glacier, with the option to visit Hobbiton, The Tongariro Crossing and Milford Sound along the way.

Our Amplified tour comes complete with some very special inclusions: experiencing a Māori cultural night traditional hāngī meal, learning haka and poi dance, and carving your very own pounamu (greenstone/jade) pendant in Franz Josef.

Accommodation is included on the last night of your tour, but we can also book a few extra nights for you if you would like to extend your stay.

Amplified Tour Tips:

- Activities can also be purchased on the road just let your tour guide know. We can't always guarantee availability when booking on the road, so we suggest pre-booking any activities you especially want to do.
- As the tour starts early in the morning, you can opt to book accommodation in Auckland or Christchurch with us the night before the tour - only having to walk downstairs on the day the tour starts makes for a stressfree morning!
- The tour price includes dorm share accommodation (4-6 share) but if you would prefer your own space you have the option to upgrade to a private room for the duration of your tour.

FLEXIBLE DEPARTURE DATES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.



TOUR INCLUSIONS

AWESOME INCLUSIONS

- Stunning walk to the spectacular arched cavern of Coromandel's Cathedral Cove
- Learn a haka and learn to weave flax with a local iwi (tribe)
- Visit Te Puia a local cultural centre to learn more about traditional Māori culture and discover Rotorua's geothermal wonders
- See kiwi birds up close and personal
- Eat a traditional Māori hāngī meal cooked in an underground oven
- ▶ Follow your nose to Rotorua's bubbling mud pools
- Discover what makes Huka Falls the most visited natural attraction in NZ
- Check out the views from Matairangi/Mount Victoria, Wellington
- ▶ Fall in love with Wellington's cafe and craft beer culture

- Iconic ferry ride between the North and South Islands across the Cook Strait
- Get up close to Kaikōura's cutest residents at a local seal colony
- Explore downtown Christchurch and see its inspiring regeneration since the 2011 earthquake
- Visit the tiny Church of the Good Shepherd, nestled by the shores of Lake Tekapo
- Unparalleled stargazing opportunities in Tekapo's Dark Sky Reserve
- Two nights in Queenstown, the Adventure Capital of the World
- Visit the charming, historic gold rush village of Arrowtown
- Carve your own pounamu (jade) pendant in Franz Josef
- Visit the Mountain Jade Factory in Hokitika
- Plus many surprise stops along the way

ALL ADVENTURE TOURS INCLUDE

ORIENTATION TOURS

We give you the low-down on every location.

COMFORTABLE TRANSPORT

With plenty of room to spread out.

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST EVERY DAY

Heaps of options for everyone (you too, vegans!)

HIGH-END HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION

Dorm share, upgrades available.

CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

To teach you about our unique Māori culture.

EXPERIENCED LOCAL GUIDE

Friendly, knowledgeable and passionate about NZ

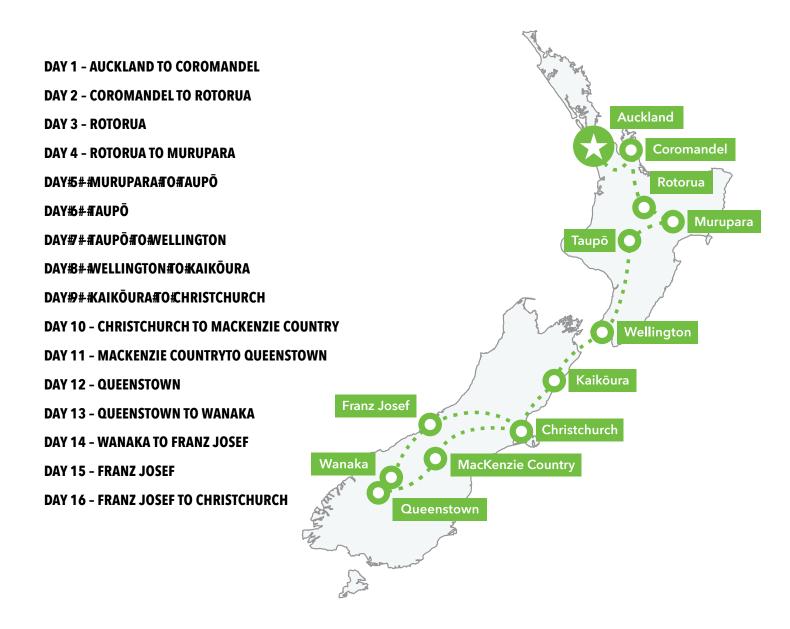
SMALL GROUPS - MAXIMUM 16

Because you're more than just a number!





ITINERARY SUMMARY





DAY 1 - AUCKLAND TO COROMANDEL

INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- Visit Hot Water Beach

Leaving the big smoke behind, we head to the Coromandel Peninsula, a veritable paradise of beautiful beaches and misty rainforests. The drive here is epic - the road twists and turns dramatically round the coastline and the ocean gets clearer and more pristine before your eyes. Cameras ready - the views are magnificent!

The Coromandel is home to the famous Hot Water Beach - thousands visit each year to dig their own personal hot tub. If the tide times allow, we'll definitely grab our buckets and spades and get busy!

We arrive in Whitianga with plenty of time for your guide to show you around. Sample the sandy beaches or simply enjoy the vibes.





DAY 2 - COROMANDEL TO ROTORUA

INCLUDED

Breakfast

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Hobbiton Movie Set Tour
- Cathedral Cove Kayaking

This morning walk along the cliffs and down to Cathedral Cove (which you might recognize from the Chronicles of Narnia). With perfect beaches and massive rock arches and columns, it's one of the most popular spots in the Coromandel.

Alternatively, take an optional guided Cathedral Cove kayak trip and check out this stunning coastline from a different angle, accompanied by a local dolphin or two if you're lucky!

Later this afternoon we head towards Rotorua (or Rotovegas as it is locally known). En route, we'll visit Matamata - best known for being the home of Hobbiton.

For Lord of the Rings fans, a visit to Hobbiton Movie Set is an absolute must-do. On a fully guided tour of the 12 acre Middle-earth set you will see Hobbit Holes, the Mill, and even enjoy a drink at the Green Dragon Inn!

If hobbits aren't your thing there are plenty of scenic short walks to enjoy Matamata's lush green rolling hills.

While the majority of the North Island is volcanic in some way, Rotorua is exceptional for its geothermal activity. With neon blue and red lakes, steaming rivers, active volcanoes and geysers galore, there are more unique natural wonders to be found in Rotorua than many other places in the world.





DAY 3 - ROTORUA

INCLUDED

Breakfast

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Black Water Rafting with transport from Rotorua (Full Day)
- Two Cave Combo with transport from Rotorua (Full Day)
- Forest Zipline
- ▶ White Water Rafting
- River Sledging
- ZORB
- ▶ Mt Tarawera Summit Hike

Today is a free day to explore Rotorua and its surrounding area. Talk to your guide for the best free things to see and do in the neighbourhood (Kuirau Park's steaming and hissing mud pools are a great option).

There are also a number of optional activities you can choose from:

If adrenaline is your thing, the highest commercial waterfall drop in the world, on the Kaituna River, is begging to be conquered on an exhilarating rafting trip.

Perhaps you'd like to try thundering down grassy hills in a giant aircushioned inflatable ball (aka ZORB)?

A day trip to Waitomo is another option today. Famous for its glowworms there are a number of ways to experience these twinking creatures up close.

Discover the magic of both the world-famous Waitomo Glowworm Caves, as well as the enchanting Ruakuri Cave on a '2 cave combo' walking/boat tour.

Or you can float along an underground river on a Black Water Rafting trip as the glow worms light your path.

However you spend today - be sure to get a good night's sleep as there are more Rotorua adventures tomorrow!





DAY 4 - ROTORUA TO MURUPARA

INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- ▶ Visit Te Puia Maori Village
- See kiwi birds
- ▶ See the Pohutu Geyser
- ▶ Learn the haka
- Learn to weave flax
- Dinner (a hangi cooked in an underground oven)

This morning we visit Te Puia Maori Village. Here you'll learn more about Maori history and culture, come face to face with the Pohutu Geyser, see jumping mud pools and get up close and personal with kiwi birds.

Later this afternoon we head to Kohutapu Lodge in Murupara - a living Māori village - where you will experience a tribal tour by a village elder.

Here you'll also have a chance to learn the world-famous haka dance, and weave your own dinner plate using flax (a type of plant).

Tonight's dinner is a traditional hāngi meal. Cooked in an underground earth oven you can expect tender meat and delicious vegetables infused with a smoky, earthy fragrance – it will fill your puku (belly) right up!

The best part about spending the evening at Kohutapu Lodge? The majority of proceeds from this activity go back to the local community.





DAY#5##MURUPARA#TO#TAUPŌ

INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- ► Find natural hot springs

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Water Touch Bungy
- ► Skydive
- Sail Fearless Lake Taupō Sailing

It's only a short drive to our next destination, Taupō, and there's plenty to discover along the way. From mesmerising mud pools to the thundering rapids of the Huka Falls and Aratiatia Dam, your trusty guide will make sure you don't miss a thing.

Taupō is a beautiful lakeside town with a stunning mountain backdrop. Lake Taupō is New Zealand's largest lake - believe it or not, it's roughly the same size as Singapore!

This place is all about the thrills and spills, and there are plenty of options in store this afternoon. Get your hair wet with a water touch bungy jump, take an unforgettable skydive or a sunset lake cruise for amazing lake and mountain views.





DAY#5##FAUPŌ

INCLUDED

Breakfast

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- The Tongariro Crossing (guided and unguided tours available, depending on the season)
- ► Skydive
- ► Water Touch Bungy
- ▶ Sail Fearless Lake Taupō Sailing

A full day in Taupō... are you in the mood for peaceful lakeside tranquillity or unlimited adrenaline and adventure? Either way, Taupō's got you covered. For many, the ultimate adventure on offer here is the hiking (or tramping, as we Kiwis know it).

The Tongariro Crossing is among the top 10 full-day walks in the world. This 19.4-kilometre mountain trek boasts emerald green lakes, venting steam, lava flows and craters. You'll come back grinning from ear to ear before falling into bed and sleeping like a baby.

If you'd prefer to relax, jump on a boat for a sailing trip to view Māori rock carvings. Or head to Spa Park and soak until your fingers are wrinkly. However you choose to spend today we guarantee you won't forget it.





DAY#7##AUPO#O#WELLINGTON

INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- Scenic drive through Tongariro National Park

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Weta Workshop Tour

It's a big drive from Taupō to Wellington, but there's some unmissable scenery on offer. Lord of the Rings junkies, you're in for a treat!

Our journey takes us through Tongariro National Park via the Rangipo Desert (bet you didn't know New Zealand had one of those!). Some of your favourite *Lord of the Rings* battle scenes were filmed right here.

The Desert Road boasts incredible views of three active volcanic peaks - Mount Tongariro, Mount Ngauruhoe, and Mount Ruapehu. You may know Mount Ngauruhoe as Mount Doom, so be sure to snap a Mordor selfie!

We pass through two of the North Island's quirkier towns - as ever, your guide has a couple of surprises up their sleeve...

We pull into Wellington in the afternoon, with just enough time for film buffs make a trip to Weta Workshop, where the special effects of Lord of the Rings and Avatar were produced.

New Zealand's capital is famous for its bars and eateries, and is a paradise for lovers of craft beer - you'll be spoilt for choice tonight!





DAY#8#-#WELLINGTON#TO#KAIKŌURA

INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- Cook Strait Ferry Crossing
- Mt Victoria Lookout

Packed with quirky cafes and beautiful street art, and famous for its wind, Wellington will blow you away in more ways than one! Your guide will introduce you to some of our favourite spots this morning. If there wasn't a chance yesterday we'll take a trip up Mount Victoria for the best views in town.

Later on we say farewell to the North Island with a scenic ferry journey across the Cook Strait. The South Island has a stunning welcome in store for us – gliding through the Marlborough Sounds as we approach Picton Harbour, you'll feel like you're in another world.

Our next destination, Kaikōura literally means "to eat crayfish", and the area is teeming with them. The nutrient-rich waters of this area attract a wide variety of marine wildlife including the stars of the show - the whales and dolphins.





DAY#9##KAIKŌURA#O#CHRISTCHURCH

INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- Visit a seal colony

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ► Dolphin Encounter
- ► Whale Watching
- Guided Seal Kayaking
- Swim With Seals

The chance to swim with dolphins in the wild is a massive New Zealand highlight for many travellers, and Kaikōura is one of the best places to find them, with pods of up to 300 of these playful creatures hanging out here at any one time.

If you want to get up close to the giants of the ocean, a whale watching tour here is the way to do it. Humpbacks, sperm whales and orca all stop by at various times of year, so this is a great chance to meet some of them.

After visiting the local seals on our way out of town, our road trip continues to our home for the night - Christchurch, known as the "Garden City" for its peaceful parklands and lazy rivers.





DAY 10 - CHRISTCHURCH TO MACKENZIE COUNTRY

INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- Christchurch City Tour
- ▶ Visit the Church of the Good Shepherd
- ▶ Experience Tekapo's Dark Sky Reserve

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Grand Traverse Scenic Flight

This morning we'll explore iconic downtown Christchurch and your guide will show you the cool and creative ways the city is being rebuilt after the life-changing 2011 earthquake here. Christchurch folk are an innovative and creative bunch - the Transitional Cathedral, created from cardboard, is totally inspirational.

After lunch we leave the city behind and head for Lake Tekapo. The lake's breathtaking turquoise colour and mountain backdrop is a photographer's dream come true.

The tiny Church of the Good Shepherd stands right at the water's edge, proving that small is definitely beautiful. Grab some confetti and congratulate any passing brides – couples travel from all over the world for wedding shots in front of the chapel!

Tekapo has been declared an International Dark Sky Reserve and the super clear skies make it the best place in New Zealand to see the stars and galaxies on a clear night. Sit back, relax and enjoy.





DAY 11 - MACKENZIE COUNTRY TO QUEENSTOWN

INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- ► Hike up Mt John (optional)
- ▶ Visit Kawarau Gorge

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Grand Traverse Scenic Flight
- Bungy Jump

This morning if you're feeling energetic, hike up to the summit of Mt John. With awesome views of the Southern Alps, you'll feel on top of the world. Speaking of views, today's scenic drive to Queenstown is a show-stopper.

From the golden tussocklands of Mackenzie country - where epic battles of Return of the King were filmed - to the dramatic peaks of the Southern Alps, it's like you're driving into a postcard.

We'll pause for lots of photo stops en route to give your camera a workout, including a stop at the spectacular Kawarau Gorge. This also happens to be the World Home of Bungy, give it a go or enjoy watching the jumpers scream their way through the gorge!

Whether you're an adrenaline junkie, an avid hiker, wine taster or scenery lover, Queenstown has something for absolutely everyone. With two nights and plenty of daylight hours here, get ready – this town certainly knows how to live life to the max!





DAY 12 - QUEENSTOWN

INCLUDED

▶ Breakfast

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Milford Sound Coach/Cruise
- Milford Sound Flight/Cruise
- Canyon Swing
- Bungy Jumping
- Skydiving
- Paragliding
- Shotover Jet Boat
- ► Canyoning
- Horse Trek Lord of the Rings
- ▶ Lord of the Rings 4WD Safari
- ► Heli-Mountain Biking

With a full day in Queenstown, let's work on that bucket list! There are heaps of options to choose from: paragliding over the lake, mountain bike parks and trails to die for, bungy jumping while your friends cheer you on, horse riding through *Lord of the Rings* scenery, and swinging through a canyon are just a few of our favourites.

For scenery lovers, Milford Sound is a must-see. Whether you fly or drive, the scenery en route is as awesome as the destination. Once on the Sound, sailing beneath thundering waterfalls and towering cliff faces, you'll understand why some call it the "8th Wonder of the World"

Tonight you have around 40 bars to choose from - your guide will fill you in on their favourites - to share your adventures with your travel buddies, and party the night away.





DAY 13 - QUEENSTOWN TO WANAKA

INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- Visit Arrowtown a charming and historic gold rush village

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Canyon Swing
- Bungy Jumping
- Paragliding
- Shotover Jet Boat
- ► Canyoning
- ► Horse Trekking Lord of the Rings
- ▶ Lord of the Rings 4WD Safari

One last morning in Queenstown to work on that bucket list. What will it be today - a canyoning experience, Lord of the Rings 4x4 safari, or a jet boat ride along the Shotover River? There are so many options. You decide.

After the excitement of Queenstown, the afternoon is a chance to chill. Wanaka is Queenstown's slightly quieter little sister, a mere one hour drive away. On the way we'll stop in at charming Arrowtown, a historic gold rush village with heaps of old world character.

Blessed with towering peaks and a glacial blue lake, you'll soon see why Wanaka's considered to be one of New Zealand's most beautiful mountain towns. There are stunning hikes and bike rides all around for a welcome chance to relax.





DAY 14 - WANAKA TO FRANZ JOSEF

INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- Lake Hawea Lookout
- ► Haast Pass

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Aerobatic Plane Flight
- ► Skydive
- Wanaka Bike Tour
- ▶ Mou Waho Lake Cruise & Island Nature Walk

This morning is about exploring Wanaka. How, exactly, is up to you! Optional activities include an aerobatic plane flight, skydiving, a bike tour along Wanaka's lakeside, or a lake cruise and nature walk on Mou Waho Island.

If none of those appeal, there are lots of scenic short walks in the area - including a visit to #thatwanakatree. Talk to your guide for the best options.

The journey to Franz is another stunner - many of our guides rate it as their favourite drive in New Zealand.

As we hit the road, we'll stop at one of our favourite lakeside lookout points at Lake Hawea or Lake Wanaka. Your guide will keep an eye on the weather and pick the best option.

From the cascading waterfalls of Haast Pass to classic Kiwi coastal views, you won't want to nap on the bus in case you miss anything. Your guide will have some epic surprise photo stops and short walks along the way.

We roll into Franz Josef around late afternoon/early evening. This UNESCO World Heritage area is famous for its spectacular glacier, just 5 kilometres from town, which is begging to be explored tomorrow.





DAY 15 - FRANZ JOSEF

INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- ▶ Carve your own pounamu necklace

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Glacier Heli Hike
- Scenic Helicopter Flight With Snow Landing
- ► Kayak in Glacier Country
- Quad Biking

With Aoraki/Mount Cook (New Zealand's highest mountain) twinkling behind the glaciers, Franz Josef is about as beautiful a setting as you can find in New Zealand.

Te Wahi Pounamu (which means 'the place of greenstone' in Māori) is the name given to this part of the West Coast because of the abundance of pounamu (greenstone/jade) to be found here. Included in your tour today is a special opportunity to carve your very own pounamu pendant at a local gallery.

There are heaps of ways to enjoy Franz Josef Glacier; weather permitting, to get up onto the bluest ice you can take a scenic helicopter flight and hike onto the glaciers. Maybe you'd prefer to kayak on a glacial lake; or just relax in the steamy hot springs down below.

As well as the awesome glacier activities you could also try out quad biking and even a bit of group karaoke tonight in Franz Josef!





DAY 16 - FRANZ JOSEF TO CHRISTCHURCH

INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- Visit Hokitika Greenstone Factory
- ► TranzAlpine Train Journey

Before you know it, it's your last day! After breakfast we head further along the beautiful west coast on another of the most spectacular drives in the country (and, some would say, the world): a rugged, primeval landscape of luxuriant rainforest juxtaposed against breathtaking beach and ocean waves.

We stop at Hokitika and visit a greenstone factory, a great place to stock up on souvenirs for your friends and family back home. Time permitting, we may also visit the National Kiwi Centre where there is guaranteed viewing of rare kiwi birds in their nocturnal house.

On the way back to Christchurch, you'll traverse the South Island on the stunning TranzAlpine Train Crossing. Travelling across the Southern Alps through Arthur's Pass, you'll arrive in Christchurch around 6.30pm before transferring to your accommodation.

Your tour officially ends at 8pm today in Christchurch, so feel free to party on with your new travel buddies for as long as you like - your accommodation tonight is included so you can treat yourself to a lie-in in the morning!





FAQ's

WHERE DOES THE TOUR START AND END?

This tour starts in Auckland at 8am on Day 1 and wraps up at 8pm on the evening of Day 16 in Christchurch, but your final nights accommodation is included.

Most customers stay with us the night before the tour starts, which means a super relaxed start to your experience. You can choose to do this as you build your tour online.

CAN I BOOK EXTRA ACCOMMODATION?

Yes - we would be happy to book extra accommodation in Auckland before your tour or in either Wellington or Auckland at the end of your tour.

DO YOU VISIT MILFORD SOUND ON THIS TOUR?

We offer an optional trip to the wonderful Milford Sound while in Queenstown. There are a few different options for the excursion, which you can view online.

WHAT ARE THE MOST POPULAR ACTIVITIES ON THIS TOUR?

Everyone has their own favourites, but in general we find that these are the most popular:

- Skydiving Taupō
- Nevis Bungy Queenstown
- Rafting Rotorua
- ▶ Dolphin Swim Kaikōura
- ▶ Heli-Hike Franz Josef

Please be aware that your guide will fit your activities in the best way possible depending on what activities are selected - so they may take place on different days or times than those listed on this itinerary.

I AM TRAVELLING ALONE - CAN I JOIN THIS TOUR?

Yes! Around 70% of our guests are solo so you can absolutely join this, or any other of our tours. There are no single person supplements.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I BUDGET PER DAY FOR FOOD AND WHAT FOOD IS INCLUDED?

Your guide will supply a continental breakfast each morning of your tour. This will consist of cereal, toast, tea, coffee and juice. And we take any special requests also.

Lunches and dinners are at your own expense. Our guides know the best places in each town and city depending on your budget and what you are after, and they will point these out on the way into each location.

Some nights the tour group may choose to cook a meal together. You will head to a supermarket to get everything and then cook as a group at the hostel.

Whoever joins in splits the cost, and it usually works out to be about NZ\$10 per person. A fun, social and cheap dinner.

Likewise the tour group and guide often head out to a local pub for a beer and a meal. Meals can range from NZ\$15 upwards. In summer it's not uncommon to have a BBQ washed down with a few drinks.





FAQ's

DO YOU CATER FOR VEGETARIANS/VEGANS?

Yes - we often have vegetarian/vegan guests and all cafes and restaurants in New Zealand offer these options. If you can't see any on the menu just ask, as most places will happily prepare something for you.

HOW FAR IN ADVANCE SHOULD I MAKE A BOOKING?

We recommend booking as soon as you know you can travel, and have decided on which tour you would like to go on. Some of our tours can be quite popular so it's best to secure your spot as soon as possible. Your spot can be booked with just a \$99 deposit and full balance is due 45 days prior to departure. You can log into your account at any time up until 45 days prior to pay off part of your tour balance, add activities and customise your tour.

WHAT AGES IS THIS TOUR FOR?

We have guests that are in their late teens to their 60s but the average age is around 25-45. More important than age is attitude - we have found over the years that if you have a thirst for adventure then age is no barrier.

Please do keep in mind though that a reasonable level of fitness is required - we can talk you through any specifics. The minimum age of joining a tour is 18 years old.

Sometimes the group may head out to a bar where everyone needs to be 18 years old, and New Zealand has strict alcohol policies.

CAN I UPGRADE MY ACCOMMODATION?

If you would prefer to have your own room while on tour, it is a good idea to upgrade. Most private rooms will have an ensuite bathroom attached; however in some locations you will have a private room with shared bathroom facilities due to the hostel layout. You can read more information about our accommodation upgrades online.

CONTACT US TODAY FOR THE BEST PRICES AND SERVICES

EMAIL US

OR PHONE US NOW

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