

FIRSTLIGHTTRAVEL



*Your South Pacific Travel Specialists*

# NEW ZEALAND

2023-2024 GUIDED HOLIDAYS



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# New Zealand Uncovered



## Highlights

### Local Connection

Enjoy an exclusive Be My Guest lunch at the Red Barn, a Waikato working dairy farm of a retired champion jockey and his wife.

### Insider Knowledge

Milford Sound/Piopirotahi has World Heritage status for good reason. Discover its flora and fauna with an eagle-eyed guide.

### Cultural Immersion

Māori culture is celebrated across the country, no more so than at Te Pā Tū Māori Experience. Be immersed in art, tradition, culture... and cuisine at a hangi feast cooked underground.

### Sustainable Footprints

New Zealand's remote regions are home to a cache of wildlife. Help protect native birds that reside on the country's largest island through the Pomona Island Charitable Trust.

### Wildlife & Nature

Penguins and sea lions are among the wildlife you'll meet when visiting Dunedin – which creature wouldn't want to live amid this postcard-perfect harbour?

## 1 Welcome to Auckland

Auckland is the kind of place you could lose yourself in for a couple of weeks. Arrive at your leisure and explore new waterfront precincts, cruise to the wineries of Waiheke Island, or just steel yourself to meet fellow travellers over dinner and a few local tipples. **Hotel: Cordis, 2 nights. DW**

## 2 Auckland

A little bit of leisure, a little bit of culture – today is one of those days. Sleep in before a peek behind the scenes of racing history on the New Zealand Maritime Museum's America's Cup Tour. Your Travel Director then takes you around the city, pausing at Bastion Point for epic photo opportunities. **B**

## 3 Auckland – Tauranga

Bet you didn't know New Zealand is home to horse-racing royalty. The O'Sullivan's welcome you to their Waikato estate for lunch in the Red Barn. Expect country banter, horse-riding gossip and farm-to-table fare. Venture east to the harbourside city of Tauranga, where you have a free afternoon in the Bay of Plenty to climb extinct volcano Mount Mauao or just chill on the golden sand of the main beach. **Hotel: Trinity Wharf. B BG DW**

## 4 Tauranga – Rotorua

The town of Te Puke grows most of the country's kiwis, and you'll enjoy a taste before venturing toward another hot-spot – Rotorua. Visit steamy Te Puia and tour the Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve, a staggering valley where geysers pop and thermal springs jettison skywards. The hot rocks in this part of the world are perfect for cooking your hangi (underground) feast at Te Pā Tū Māori Experience, a bastion for Māori culture. **Hotel: Millennium, 2 nights. B HD**

## 5 Rotorua Free Time

Today, choose your own adventure. We have plenty of ideas for the paths you might follow. Optional sightseeing experiences include a bedazzling show put on by the glowworms of Waitomo Caves. Or perhaps zipping across Rotorua's three lakes in an amphibious WWII-era Duck. **B**

## 6 Rotorua – Wellington

Say haere ra (goodbye) to Rotorua and hello to... an immense amount of water. First stop is the raging rapids of Huka Falls, where 220,000 litres of water barrel over an 11-metre-high waterfall every second. Your outlook then unfolds into the dreamy landscape of Lake Taupo, the largest of its kind

in the country. Traverse the volcanic Central Plateau to NZ's cool little capital of Wellington, set on a pretty harbour that beckons with too many good restaurants to choose from. **Hotel: James Cook Grand Chancellor. B**

## 7 Wellington – Blenheim

If you don't fall in love with Wellington instantly, then you will surely find a spark after visiting Te Papa, the Museum of New Zealand – the morning is yours to peruse the jaw-dropping exhibits at your leisure. Re-join your companions to cruise Cook Strait across tranquil Queen Charlotte Sound. You're on the South Island now, and a Highlight Dinner reflects the best of Marlborough food and wine. **Hotel: Chateau Marlborough. B HD**

## 8 Blenheim – Christchurch

Sperm whales and fur seals are a common sight in Kaikoura – get lucky and you can see them from shore, or sign up for a bird's-eye view on an optional scenic flight over dramatic black beaches framed by turquoise ocean. Follow the coast and Canterbury Plains to Christchurch, home to some of the country's most innovative restaurants. **Hotel: Distinction. B**

## 9 Christchurch – Twizel

From its cardboard-crafted Transitional Cathedral to its gold-clad central library, Christchurch has well and truly rebuilt itself since the 2010/11 earthquakes. But South Island locals still cherish a simple life, as you'll discover over a Be My Guest afternoon tea with retired farmers Angie and Stan Taylor among the emerald fields of their home Morelea on the edge of Lake Tekapo. **Hotel: Mackenzie Country Inn. B BG DW**

## 10 Twizel – Dunedin

We got the power – hydro, that is. The Benmore Dam holds back New Zealand's largest artificial lake, and when the Benmore Power Station was opened in 1965 it was the biggest in the country. That should fuel you through to Oamaru, with its stately tree-lined streets and glam limestone buildings, before landing in Dunedin. **Hotel: Scenic Southern Cross. B DW**

## 11 Dunedin – Te Anau

From sheep farms to rugged mountains, today is one of contrasts. Venture into Fiordland National Park toward the South Island's largest lake and the town of Te Anau, the gateway to Pomona Island where native birds are under threat – and you can help protect them. **Hotel: Distinction Te Anau. B DW**



Walter Peak High Country Farm

## 20 Included Experiences

### Departure Dates

2022	2023	2024
Oct 04, 25	Jan 03, 10, 17, 24, 31	Jan 02, 09, 16, 23, 30
Nov 15, 29	Feb 07, 14, 21, 28	Feb 06, 13, 20, 27
Dec 20, 27	Mar 07, 14, 21, 28	Mar 05, 12, 19, 26
	Apr 04, 11, 18, 25	
	Jun 06, 27	
	Sep 05, 12, 19	
	Oct 03, 10, 17, 24, 31	
	Nov 07, 14, 21, 28	
	Dec 05, 12, 19, 26	

A limited number of single rooms are available. Ask your local travel agent at time of booking.

See available prices and departure dates from 01 Apr 2024 at [atkings.com](http://atkings.com). Or contact your local travel agent.

### Dining

- 16 Full buffet breakfasts B
- 1 Be My Guest Lunch BG
- 1 Lunch L
- 1 Be My Guest Afternoon Tea BG
- 3 Highlight Dinners HD
- 7 Dinners with wine DW
- 1 Farewell Dinner FD

### Flight Information

Day 1 – flights to arrive by 4.00pm into Auckland Airport  
 Day 17 – flights to depart any time from Christchurch Airport  
**Flights are not included in the holiday price**

#### 12 Te Anau – Queenstown

Your journey toward Milford Sound/Piopiotahi traverses native rainforest, alluvial flats and meadows, with mirrored lakes, thundering waterfalls, dramatic rocky ranges and millennia-old valleys. That’s enough drama for an entire travel year – you still have the streets of Queenstown to explore.  
**Hotel: Millennium, 2 nights. B**

#### 13 Queenstown Free Time

Adrenaline-junkies may wish to zip about in the Shotover Jet, get some perspective on a gondola to Bob’s Peak or tour the gorges of Skippers Canyon. Gourmand at heart? Perhaps a Central Otago wine tour? Your day ends on a dreamy TSS Earnslaw cruise across Lake Wakatipu, landing at Walter Peak High Country Farm for a gourmet barbecue Highlight Dinner at the Colonel’s Homestead. **B HD**

#### 14 Queenstown – Franz Josef/Waiau

From Arrowtown’s tree-lined avenues to Central Otago’s gleaming lakes, nature rules. Alpine scenery tiers into rainforest along the West Coast, where Thunder Creek Falls and the glacier-studded Mount Hooker steal the scene. Welcome to Franz Josef Glacier/Kā Roimata o Hine Hukatere, which is ideally explored on an optional helicopter flight – you may be able to land and walk across the ice-fall. **Hotel: Scenic Franz Josef Glacier (Douglas Wing). B DW**

#### 15 Franz Josef/Waiau – Punakaiki

Swap white at Franz Josef/Kā Roimata o Hine Hukatere for greenstone (native jade) at Hokitika. Then steel yourself for the Pancake Rocks and blowholes of Punakaiki, a sliver of South Island geology that is as humbling as it is awe-inspiring. **Hotel: Ocean View Retreat. B DW**

#### 16 Punakaiki – Christchurch

Beer for breakfast? We’ve got you sorted on a morning tour of legendary Monteith’s Brewery. The best is yet to come – all aboard for the scenic TranzAlpine train back to Christchurch, through tunnels and over viaducts, with panoramic views of snow-capped peaks, icy rivers, beech forests, gorges and river valleys. **Hotel: Distinction. B L FD**

#### 17 Farewell from Christchurch

How many travel highs can you pack into a holiday? Now all you have to do is go home and sort through all those photos. **B**

