



TOTAL AOTEAROA – 23 DAYS (AKL-AKL)

TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- All transport
 - Camping accommodation
 - Experienced Tour Guide
-

TOUR DESCRIPTION:

Our Total Aotearoa tour covers all the main attractions of New Zealand. We cram a lot into 24 days including National Parks, sleeping under the stars to the sound of the ocean, heaps of activities from dolphin swimming to bungee jumping, optional hikes and bike rides every day and of course getting to know the locals!

DAY 1: AUCKLAND – HOT WATER BEACH

We leave Auckland at 8am and drive south towards the Coromandel Peninsula. The Coromandel is a popular holiday spot for us Kiwi's and it's not hard to see why. With stunning white sandy beaches, dense fern forests and a rich history of both Maori and European settlement, the Coromandel Peninsula is the perfect place to start your trip!

After a lunch stop in the seaside town of Tairua, we'll travel to Hahei Beach - the gateway to Cathedral Cove. You can either walk along the coastline or get stuck in to the first optional activity on your trip with one of the best sea kayak options in the country. Cathedral Cove has a stunning limestone archway that featured as the gateway to Narnia in the movie 'Prince Caspian' and is a great place to take a dip in the turquoise waters of the Pacific Ocean before heading back to Hahei and on to camp at another iconic location, Hot Water Beach. Our campground is a short walk away from the beach where, at low tide, you can grab a shovel and head down to dig your very own hot pool in the sand! This is all thanks to a unique geothermal reservoir of hot water under the sand, what a way to round off your first day on tour!

Meals included:	Dinner
Walks:	Stunning coastal walk with views over the Pacific
Bike rides:	8km scenic road cycling
Activities (own cost):	Sea kayaking, Hahei Explorer
Cabin upgrades:	Yes - subject to availability

DAY 2: HOT WATER BEACH - ROTORUA

After breakfast we'll start our journey towards the central area of the North Island but before that, we'll explore a little more of the Coromandel Peninsula. We'll drive down to the historic gold mining town of Waihi and take a look at the huge 'Martha's Mine', a working gold mine! Afterwards, the cyclists among us will have the chance to ride a section of the Hauraki Rail Trail and the rest of us will head to the Karangahake Gorge for an historic walk. We'll look through the 'windows of the past' of mining history and see some pretty spectacular landscapes along the way. When everyone is back together we'll enjoy a picnic lunch in the gorge before continuing on to Rotorua.

There are heaps of optional activities in Rotorua including a zipline eco tour, zorbing, luging or relaxing in a thermal spa. If you'd prefer to explore the natural geothermal features of the area, there's plenty of world famous bike trails and walks in the area too. In the evening, we recommend immersing yourself in Maori culture at the Mitai Maori Village where you'll learn about Maori culture, experience an equally stunning and terrifying Haka and feast on a traditional Hangi meal.

There's a lot to pack into one day but we promise it'll leave you wanting more!

Meals included:	Breakfast & lunch
Walks:	Stroll through towering, ancient forests & unique thermal landscapes
Bike rides:	Hauraki Rail Trail, Te Ara ahi trail to Redwoods, Whakarewarewa Forest
Activities (own cost):	Mitai Maori Village, Zorb, Luge, hot pools, Zipline Canopy Tour
Cabin upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 3: ROTORUA – TAUPO

We begin the day with a short drive to visit some of the North Island's most impressive geothermal sites. We'll see bubbling mud pools, a huge Geyser and then take some time to explore the Wai o Tapu Geothermal Wonderland, home to an impressive array of multi coloured rock formations and pools created by superheated water bringing minerals to the surface creating this otherworldly landscape.

Our next stop on the way into Taupo is the mighty Huka Falls, an impressive waterfall found along the Waikato river. This is also our drop off point for those wanting to go white water rafting or skydiving! If you're not doing these activities there's a great walk or a bike ride into the city along the river's edge - be sure to stop off at the natural hot spring along the way or get an adrenaline buzz from the Taupo bungy which is conveniently located on your way into town. You'll have some time in Taupo to grab some lunch and check out New Zealand's largest lake, Lake Taupo, before we make our way to camp later that afternoon.

Meals included:	Breakfast & dinner
Walks:	Walks of various distances past dramatic waterfalls and around Lake Taupo
Bike rides:	Waikato River MTB Trail Huka Falls 6.4km, cycle on the lakefront – up to 10km
Activities (own cost):	Skydiving, bungy, giant swing, Te Puia - Te Ra Guided Experience
Cabin upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 4: TAUPO – KAPITI COAST

Voted one of the best day hikes in the world, today's 19.4km walk takes in some of New Zealand's most impressive and diverse landscapes. The challenging Tongariro Alpine Crossing hike covers a small section of the country's oldest national park and dual UNESCO world heritage area, the Tongariro National Park. On a fine day you'll be able to see Mt Ruapehu, the North Island's highest peak which stands at a towering 2797 metres. You'll also be able to see Mt Ngauruhoe, which featured in Lord of the Rings as Mount Doom.

If you'd prefer not to do this hike, there's cycle options or a walk along the Tongariro river where you'll have a beautiful mountainous backdrop. When everyone is back together after the hike we'll start making our way to our camp, situated along the Kapiti Coast.

Meals included:	Breakfast, lunch & dinner
Walks:	Tongariro Alpine Crossing, Tongariro river track
Bike rides:	Tongariro river track
Activities (own cost):	Tongariro Alpine Crossing (transfer fee only)
Cabin upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 5: KAPITI COAST – WELLINGTON – PICTON

This morning it's a short drive to Wellington, New Zealand's capital city! We'll arrive before 9am giving you most of the day to explore the Te Papa Museum, Weta Workshop and the Botanical Gardens. The capital is also home to the Beehive, our government building, as well as great shopping areas and a thriving café culture to explore - Wellington is renowned for serving NZ's best cup of coffee.

Later on we'll be travelling across the Cook Strait by ferry to the South Island. The ferry takes approximately 3 hours and is very scenic, particularly as the boat makes its way through the Marlborough sounds just before reaching Picton. The rolling green hills offer a stark contrast to the blue waters of the sound and make for a magical sight. If you can, make your way outside and try and spot dolphins playing in the sounds.

Camping isn't possible tonight so we'll stay at a great hostel with various room options, we've booked everyone's dorm beds so there's no need to do anything.

Meals included:	Breakfast
Accommodation:	Dorm bed
Activities (own cost):	Te Papa National Museum of NZ (free), Weta Workshop, Cable car

DAY 6: PICTON - KAIKOURA

We'll depart Picton and travel through the Marlborough region towards the coast where the views of the Pacific Ocean are complemented by the mountains in the distance. Along this stretch of coastline, we'll make a stop for lunch and try to spot the native Fur Seals that often relax on the rocks in front of the ocean.

Kaikoura is all about the ocean and offers options to go whale watching, sea kayaking and fishing. If you'd prefer to explore the area on foot, there's a great walk around the peninsula or you can hop on your bike and take in the views on two wheels.

Our camp tonight is down at the beach and we'll be preparing a fresh seafood meal to complement the area's abundant sea life (unless of course you don't eat seafood, in which case we'll prepare something equally delicious for you).

Meals included:	Breakfast & dinner
Walks:	Kaikoura peninsula walk
Bike rides:	9km ride from South Bay to camp
Activities (own cost):	Whale watching by boat or by plane, deep sea fishing
Cabin upgrades:	Yes - subject to availability

DAY 7: KAIKOURA - CHRISTCHURCH - RANGITATA

This morning you'll have the opportunity to take part in one of the most popular activities in New Zealand: swimming with dusky dolphins! It's an early start but it's a great way to begin your day from the epic sunrise to swimming with wild dolphins, this is the kind of once in a lifetime experience you won't soon forget. For those of us who aren't swimming, we'll have a leisurely breakfast and the chance to explore Kaikoura before heading south to Christchurch.

We'll arrive in Christchurch in time for lunch and you'll have a couple of hours to explore the city that's still on the mend after two major earthquakes in 2010 and 2011. Evidence of these earthquakes can be found all over, but there's also some new and exciting rebuilding happening. Visit the restart mall, made from shipping containers which were brought in shortly after the quakes, check out the botanical gardens and see the remains of the Christchurch Cathedral which famously collapsed during the earthquakes.

After leaving Christchurch we'll start heading towards the mountains and across the Canterbury plains, a flat open area of farmland. Tonight we'll stay in Peel Forest, close to the Rangitata River.

Meals included:	Breakfast & dinner
Walks:	Take an early walk around our coastal camp, evening walk in peel forest
Bike rides:	9 - 18km country road cycling
Activities (own cost):	Dolphin swimming, dolphin viewing
Cabin upgrades:	Yes - subject to availability

DAY 8: RANGITATA - LAKE TEKAPO

Wake up to mountain views and try white water rafting on the mighty Rangitata River! If rafting isn't for you, soak it all in with a morning cycle or walk through Peel forest. We then head through more jaw dropping landscapes (they don't stop in the South Island) to the picture postcard, Lake Tekapo. Here you will view the most spectacular turquoise waters which get their colour from the glacial flour brought down from the rivers flowing from glaciers high up in the mountains.

Relax in the nearby hot pools or enjoy star gazing at the Mt John Observatory and make the most of staying in an International Dark Sky Reserve, plus there are plenty of hike and cycle options to choose from.

Meals included:	Breakfast & lunch
Walks:	Peel forest, Mt John walkway
Bike rides:	Peel forest cycle ride then Lake Tekapo Regional Park

Activities (own cost):	Tekapo Hotel Pools, Dark Sky Project - Dark Sky Experience, Virtual Stargazing Experience or Summit Experience
Cabin upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 9: LAKE TEKAPO – MT COOK – MOERAKI

Immerse yourself in the snow-capped mountain scenery that New Zealand is famous for and explore Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park. Hike to the base of NZ's highest mountain following a trail up the Hooker valley where you'll cross swing bridges and get stunning views of the mountains before finishing up at a glacial lake with views of the Hooker Valley glacier. We then travel back towards the Pacific coast for a quick stop in the historic town of Oamaru before continuing onwards to the small village of Moeraki. Walk to a great view point offering expansive views of the Pacific Ocean and try to spot a little Blue Penguin along the shore. If you have a bike it's possible to visit a colony of extremely rare Yellow-eyed Penguins near to camp.

Meals included:	Breakfast, lunch & dinner
Walks:	To the base of Mount Cook & Hooker Valley, explore the Moeraki Heritage Trail
Bike rides:	13km Alps2Ocean trail ride, Yellow-eyed penguin colony
Cabin upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 10: MOERAKI VILLAGE – DUNEDIN

If the tide is low then we can walk along the beach to the mysterious Moeraki boulders. These perfectly round spheres of rock have formed over millions of years and have found their way onto the beach near Moeraki and make for some fun photo opportunities.

Afterwards it's onto the historic Scottish city of Dunedin, the South Island's second-largest city. This southern city is home to the world's steepest residential street and the coastline is home to some fantastic and rare wildlife. It's possible to take a tour onto the Otago Peninsula to view some of this diverse wildlife which includes Albatross and Fur Seals. For the adventurous, why not try surfing at one of Dunedin's best breaks! Our camp is a short distance from St. Kilda beach with a variety of restaurants close by to choose from.

Meals included:	Breakfast
Walks:	Moeraki heritage trail, World's steepest street, explore Dunedin city
Bike rides:	Dunedin soldier memorial 12km, ride from the city to camp or along the waterfront
Activities (own cost):	Otago Peninsula Wildlife Tour, Otago Early Settlers Museum
Cabin upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 11: DUNEDIN – FIORDLAND NATIONAL PARK

Today is one of our longer travel days as we drive through some of New Zealand's most dramatic natural scenery on our way to Fiordland. Large parts of the landscape have been carved out over thousands of years to leave stunning paths that weave through snow-capped mountains. We stop briefly in Te Anau, the hub and gateway town for Fiordland National Park and Milford Sound and your last chance to get supplies for those doing the Routeburn Track tomorrow. Tonight's camp is on the lakeside in Te Anau.

Meals included:	Breakfast & dinner
Walks:	Plenty of short walks from camp
Bike rides:	8km road cycle to camp
Cabin upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 12: TE ANAU – MILFORD SOUND – TE ANAU

Travel one of the world's most scenic routes into Milford Sound! Described as the 'eighth wonder of the world', Milford Sound was carved by glaciers during the ice ages. We highly recommend taking a cruise on Milford Sound where you'll see dramatic waterfalls, snow-capped peaks and have the chance to spot wildlife such as dolphins, penguins and seals! As it's just the one road in and out, we head back along the same breath-taking route to our lakeside camp in Te Anau. Along the way, we drop off those doing the 3-day Routeburn Track, one of New Zealand's 9 Great Walks. This 3-day hike passes through two National Parks and is a haven for native birdlife. Charge up your camera as this hike offers everything from mountainous peaks and sheer rock faces to pristine lakes, cascading waterfalls and dense, luxuriant forest.

Meals included:	Breakfast & lunch
Walks:	The awesome 3-day Routeburn Track (rejoin group in Queenstown on day 14)
Bike rides:	10.5km Te Anau loop, Ivan Wilson Park Mountain bike trail
Activities (own cost):	Milford Sound Cruise, Te Anau glowworm caves tour & boat ride
Cabin upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 13: TE ANAU - QUEENSTOWN

Today we journey to Queenstown along the shores of the photogenic Lake Wakatipu. Once we arrive at the adventure capital of New Zealand you have a huge selection of activities to choose from. There is everything here, from adrenalin pumping bungy, canyon swing and skydiving to a relaxing horse trek or boat cruise – this place has it all. There are great tracks around the lake ideal for bikers and hikers and all with wonderful views of this alpine region. Camping isn't feasible in this bustling alpine village, for the next two nights we stay in dorm-share accommodation (cost included) in a centrally located hostel. Perfect for making the most of all Queenstown has to offer.

Meals included:	Breakfast
Walks:	Queenstown walks, lakefront, Queenstown hill
Bike rides:	Lake Wakatipu trail 16km
Activities (own cost):	Too many to list – something for everyone (see our website or ask us for details)
Private room upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 14: QUEENSTOWN

With so much to do we spend the full day in fantastic Queenstown with the opportunity to enjoy those once in a lifetime experiences (don't forget to try the legendary and very tasty Fergburger!). Routeburn Track walkers rejoin the group here at midday with time to try some of the many exciting activities this vibrant city has to offer. Tonight, we dine out at one of Queenstown's many delicious eateries - a great chance for your group to enjoy a true kiwi feast (own cost).

Meals included:	Breakfast
Walks:	Queenstown walks, Ben Lomond
Bike rides:	Lake Wakatipu trail, Queenstown trail 48km
Activities (own cost):	Too many to list – something for everyone (see our website or ask us for details)
Private room upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 15: QUEENSTOWN – LAKE WANAKA

Our final morning in Queenstown and your last chance to indulge in the Queenstown's action before we farewell those finishing their tour and welcome new travellers joining us here. Leaving at 2:30pm, after the thrills and spills of Queenstown we travel past mountains and on towards stunning glacial lakes. On the final stretch to camp we start getting views of Mt Aspiring National Park in the distance. Lake Wanaka is just over the next ridge and it's on the edge of this glacial lake that we find our next wilderness camp. Enjoy great views of Lake Wanaka and the mountains beyond as we absorb the beauty of the area.

Meals included:	Breakfast & dinner
Walks:	Multiple walking options
Bike rides:	Road cycling around town. Lake Wanaka lookout to Boundary Creek 10km
Activities (own cost):	Too many to list – something for everyone (see our website or ask us for details)
Cabin upgrades:	No – beautiful lakeside camp (alternatives will be found in bad weather)

DAY 16: LAKE WANAKA – GLACIER COUNTRY

Enjoy a relaxed morning at our lakeside camp then it's northward bound through Mt Aspiring National Park. Just before we reach the West Coast, we stop for a walk to the amazing Blue Pools, and then head over the dramatic Haast Pass. As we travel towards the wild West Coast, the road follows braided rivers and huge glacier carved valleys. There are two more great walk options along the way, one through lush and ancient forests and the other through swampy vegetation, ending on the beach where it is possible to spot Hector dolphins. Tonight, we will be staying beside the beautiful Lake Paringa enjoying a true West Coast wilderness experience.

Meals included:	Breakfast, lunch & dinner
------------------------	---------------------------

Walks:	Blue Pools, Ship Creek
Bike rides:	Knights Point lookout to Lake Paringa 25km
Cabin upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 17: GLACIER COUNTRY - OKARITO

Today is your chance to explore one of NZ's most unique and spectacular natural wonders – Franz Josef Glacier. This staggering beautiful work of nature is 12 kilometres and descends from the Southern Alps to less than 300 metres above sea level. To get on the ice you must go up by helicopter but it's possible to view the glacier with a stunning walk through the main valley up to the terminal face. Before arriving at Franz Josef, we take a highly recommended walk around Lake Matheson where crystal clear reflections of Mount Cook and Mount Tasman make the perfect photo opportunity. Late afternoon, we have a short drive up the coast to our beautiful beachside campsite next to the Okarito lagoon – one of the very few places where there are still rare sightings of our native kiwi bird and the home to NZ's only colony of the White Heron (kotuku). Enjoy a fire down on the beach taking in the rugged coast and epic mountain views.

Meals included:	Breakfast & dinner
Walks:	Hike around Lake Matheson, Te Ara a Waiau walkway
Bike rides:	Te Ara a Waiau cycleway, Okarito road ride 10km
Activities (own cost):	Guided Heli-Hike, guided kayak or SUP tour, West Coast Wildlife Centre, skydiving
Cabin upgrades:	Yes – selected nights only

DAY 18: OKARITO - PUNAKAIKI

Enjoy an early morning walk, with a view of the sunrise over the Southern Alps as a reward. We then continue up this spectacular coastal road to the quirky town of Hokitika, home to the Greenstone factories and a great place to pick up a traditional souvenir of your visit. Passing through Greymouth we keep following the coast to Punakaiki where you'll notice a change in the landscape and vegetation with huge limestone cliffs appearing and Nikau Palm trees becoming abundant. Our beach camp has great sunsets, a beautiful river and incredible views of Paparoa National Park. The pancake rocks and blowholes are the main attraction in Punakaiki where limestone rocks are stacked on top of each other and ocean swells are forced through gaps in the rock creating a whale's blowhole effect. In the evening, explore a cavern with some glow worms hanging out in the dark then relax at the local tavern.

Meals included:	Breakfast & dinner
Walks:	Sunrise Okarito Trig Walk
Bike rides:	West Coast Wilderness Trail 14km, road ride to camp 37km
Activities (own cost):	Punakaiki pancake rocks & blow holes (free)
Cabin upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 19: PUNAKAIKI - ABEL TASMAN NATIONAL PARK

Before leaving Punakaiki we take time to explore part of the Paparoa National Park with a walk along the Pororari river or cycle up Bullock creek road to visit a cave resurgence. Leaving mid-morning we travel inland through the majestic Buller gorge and onto our favourite National Park, Abel Tasman. In one of the sunniest areas of the country you will discover beautiful secluded bays and stunning golden sand beaches. We look forward to spending 2 nights at our perfectly located camp, close to the park entrance which makes it the ideal place to explore all corners of the stunning Abel Tasman.

Meals included:	Breakfast & dinner
Walks:	Truman track
Bike rides:	Coastal ride to camp and Kaiteriteri bike park
Activities (own cost):	Skydiving
Cabin upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 20: ABEL TASMAN NATIONAL PARK

Taking time to explore arguably the best beaches and clearest waters in New Zealand - there are excellent options for everyone here. You can walk, sail or kayak around the numerous golden bays and dive into the crystal-clear waters along the way. There will be plenty of chances for wildlife spotting (dolphins, seals and

even Orcas!) Explore the heart of the park on one of our most highly rated optional activities - canyoning high flow waterfalls and rapids!

Meals included:	Breakfast & dinner
Walks:	Abel Tasman National Park track
Bike rides:	Kaiteriteri Mountain Bike Park
Activities (own cost):	Kayaking, canyoning, sailing, water taxi / walk
Cabin upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 21: ABEL TASMAN NATIONAL PARK – WELLINGTON

Today we head to sunny Nelson. In addition to being one of the sunniest areas of NZ its home to more than 350 working artists and craftspeople creating traditional, contemporary and Maori arts + it's a wonderful place to live! Relax and enjoy the sunshine and café culture before we depart for wine country – Marlborough, home to some of the World's best known grapes and where we'll treat you to a free tasting in one of their best vineyards. Finish this fantastic day with a scenic ferry (cost included) through the Marlborough sounds to Wellington - our base for the evening. Camping isn't feasible in the heart of the nation's capital so we will be staying in a great hostel with various room options giving you the best access to explore. We have dorm beds reserved for everyone so there's nothing to worry about.

Meals included:	Breakfast
Bike Rides:	Great Taste Trail
Walks:	Nelson town
Activities (included):	Ferry back to Wellington

DAY 22: WELLINGTON TO NEW PLYMOUTH

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast by the waterfront (own cost) and check out the sights of beautiful Wellington before we hit the road for our 11am departure. We travel up the scenic Kapiti Coast to the Taranaki region – home to wonderful beaches, crashing waves and spectacular Mount Taranaki – a perfectly formed snow-capped peak. Wellington is the nation's capital and from Maori legend its earliest name is Te Upoko o te Ika a Maui, meaning 'the head of Maui's fish'. This relates to the legend when a giant fish was pulled to the surface by Maui, the fish became the North Island. Halfway between Wellington and Auckland we find Taranaki.

Meals included:	Dinner
Walks:	New Plymouth Walkway
Bike rides:	New Plymouth Walkway
Cabin upgrades:	Yes – subject to availability

DAY 23: NEW PLYMOUTH TO AUCKLAND

We leave camp early this morning to get to Waitomo in time for people booked onto caving adventures. This optional activity sees you gearing up in a wetsuit and being guided into the vast cave systems of Waitomo to search for the beautiful glow worms that live on the walls and ceiling of the caves. If you're not heading into the caves we'll send you on a great walk through some awesome limestone cliffs and through native bush before we all join up for a picnic lunch together.

After Waitomo we're heading to Auckland where your tour ends. We arrive in the city before 6pm.

Meals included:	Breakfast & Lunch
Walks:	Forest and Cave trail
Bike rides:	Ride through Waitomo if you're not going to see the Caves
Activities (own cost):	Blackwater rafting, Waitomo caving adventures, glow worm cave tour