

INDEPENDENT TRIPS

Kiwi Explorer 17D/16N

Nature & Adventure

17 Days / 1 Country

New Zealand

Departure city: **Auckland, New Zealand**

End city: **Christchurch, New Zealand**

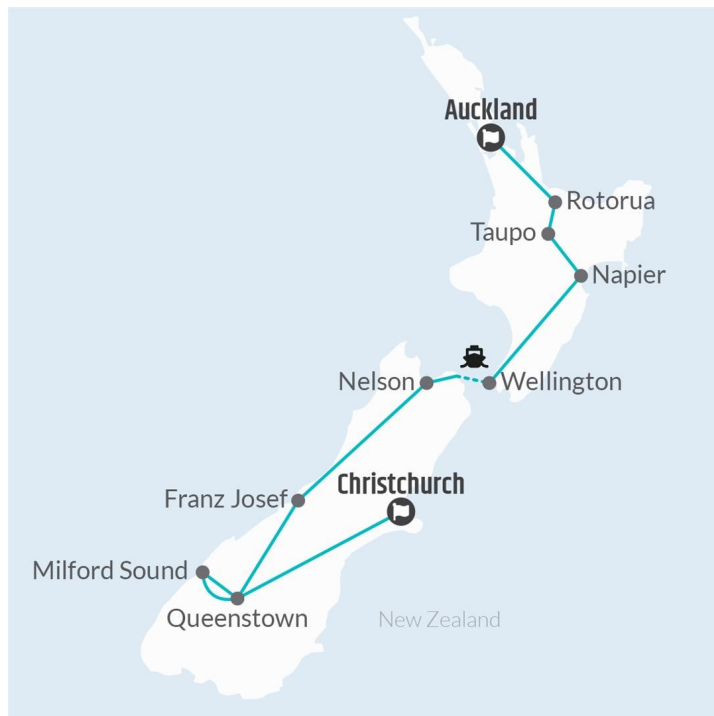


HIGHLIGHTS

- See the shimmering Waitomo Glowworm Caves
- Set foot on the Lord of the Rings movie set
- Enjoy peaceful boat rides and nature walks

Explore New Zealand from Auckland to Christchurch with lots of fun activities along the way on this exciting 17-day adventure.

MAP



What is included



Independent Trips

Include all of your accommodation, transport and experiences on a pre-set trip that you can customize to perfectly suit your travel needs.



Accommodation: 16

- 16 Nights hostel, 3 or 4-star hotel accommodation, depending on the package:



Transport: 3

- Airport Transfers & Bus Christchurch airport drop-off
- Auckland airport pick-up All coach transportation as per Itinerary



Meals: 1

- 1 Lunch(es),



Guides:

- English speaking guide/driver during experiences

What is not included

- *Other meals & drinks
- *Transfers to/from bus stations and meeting points
- *Optional activities
- *Personal expenses
- *Tips for guides
- *Travel insurance

*Prices for optional activities are subject to change at any time without prior notice. Please confirm these prices before departing on your trip.

Itinerary

Day 1: Auckland, New Zealand

Auckland Airport Pick-up

Arrive at the Auckland Airport to hop into your accommodation transfer. Enjoy the rest of the day exploring Auckland on your own.

Day 2: Auckland - Rotorua, New Zealand

Waitomo Glowworm Experience to Rotorua

Wake up early, to go on adventure through the Waikato and King Country regions. You will pass through beautiful countryside on your way. Your guide will take you through the highlights along the way, such as Rangiriri, where in 1863 a major battle was fought between colonial forces and those loyal to the Maori King.

Once you arrive at Waitomo, you will meet up with a local guide who will take you for a 45-minute tour through the world-famous Waitomo Glowworm Caves - limestone caves formed over 30 million years ago. Learn all about stalagmites, stalactites, and other intriguing rock formations as you walk through the caverns, and finish the tour with an enchanting boat ride through the Glowworm Grotto, illuminated by thousands of tiny glowworms spread across the ceiling like a blanket of stars. This might be the most peaceful and magical experience you will ever have, so try to enjoy it to the fullest. You will walk through the bush, following a short train back up to the Waitomo Caves visitor complex.

Have lunch (at your own expense) before returning back to Rotorua. Check into your new accommodation and spend the evening on your own.

Day 3: Rotorua, New Zealand

Hobbiton Experience

Make your own way to the meeting point where you will meet up your driver to travel to the Waikato region of New Zealand's North Island, and experience the rural Kiwi town of Matamata. Here, you can find the famous Hobbit movie set, known for its dramatic views of the beautiful countryside and the Kaimai Ranges, where the award-winning films of Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit were filmed.

Visit the movie set and countryside of The Shrine, which was created on the grounds of an actual beef and sheep farm. Join into a guided tour through the hobbit homes where Pippin, Merry, Sam, Frodo and Bilbo came to life. Look into the hobbit holes and explore many of the set structures, like the Mill and the Green Dragon Inn which were created specifically for these two famous movies.

After the tour, return to Rotorua. Spend the afternoon at leisure.

Day 4: Rotorua - Taupo, New Zealand

Rotorua to Taupo

Today you will travel for approximately 1 hour to Taupo. Here you will have a full day to explore this awesome town on your own. There are plenty of activities in Taupo, from adrenaline rush to more sedate activities. Skydiving to Jet Boating and Scenic flights to Taupo's AC Baths or Starlight cinema visit. It is completely up to you what you would like to do today!

Day 5: Taupo - Napier, New Zealand

Taupo to Napier

Today, you will have the chance to visit the main port city of the Hawke's Bay region. Destroyed by earthquake and fire in 1931, Napier has one of the largest concentrations of Art Deco buildings in the world. In the city, you can find various tourist attractions that suit all ages, tastes and budgets. From adrenaline filled adventure to a relaxing day out, you will not be bored here. Enjoy the afternoon on your own and take advantage of all the activities this city has to offer.

Day 6: Napier, New Zealand

Hawke's Bay Wine Tour

Get picked up from your accommodation to go for a fun-filled wine tasting afternoon in the sun, driving through an absolutely amazing scenery. You will visit four different wineries and enjoy a cheese platter on the grounds of Ngatarawa Vineyard beside the lily pond. You will have the chance to taste around 30 different wines including the main varieties of Merlot, Syrah, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc. After the tour you will be dropped off at your accommodation.

Day 7: Napier - Wellington, New Zealand

Napier to Wellington

Today you will travel from Napier to the capital of New Zealand, Wellington. This trip takes approximately 5 hours. Check-in and overnight in Wellington.

Day 8: Wellington, New Zealand

Wellington Free Day

Today you will be off on your own to explore this beautiful city and all it has to offer. From world-class restaurants to classy & trendy cafes and bars, don't forget to discover its many landmarks and attractions. We suggest that you visit The Papa museum & The Museum of Wellington City & Sea, go on a ride on the Wellington Cable cars. Enjoy a lunch at the waterfront (at your expense)

Day 9: Wellington - Nelson, New Zealand

Wellington to Nelson via Interislander

Today you will travel to the South Island from Wellington on the Interislander Ferry. Enjoy the sights as you pass into Marlborough, which offers stunning views you will not forget. When you arrive in Picton, travel West to Nelson which is the gateway to Abel Tasman National Park, and overnight!

Day 10: Nelson, New Zealand

Abel Tasman by Land & Sea Experience (L)

Get picked up from your accommodation to head into a journey to reconnect with nature. Begin your day with a walk through lush native forest from Marahau to Anchorage. Enjoy the freedom and the views that New Zealand's coastal paradise has to offer. Get the chance to go on a sailing tour at 1:30 PM from Anchorage beach to visit the Fur Seal

colony. Then take a sail back enjoying the best of the Abel Tasman coastline through Split Apple Rock into the gorgeous resort community of Kaiteriteri. Enjoy your lunch on the boat. In the end of your trip you will be dropped off at your accommodation.

Day 11: Nelson - Franz Josef, New Zealand

Nelson to Franz Josef

Today you will spend traveling from Nelson to Franz Josef, the trip takes around 10 hours with several stops on the way, for food, for pictures, for whatever is needed!

Day 12: Franz Josef, New Zealand

Franz Josef Glacier Valley Experience

Join the Franz Josef Glacier Walk, which will take you up alongside the mighty Waiho River bed. You will learn about the glacier's history, see what this majestic giant leaves behind also listen to the Ka Roimata o Hinehukatere legend. After a brief climb, you will be rewarded with a spectacular view of the glacier's rapidly changing terminal face.

This leisurely and informative journey can be tailored to suit groups of most abilities and interests, so no trip is ever the same. Accessing some exclusive trails and including great storytelling from your experienced and well-trained guide, there has never been a more extraordinary time to visit the Franz Josef Glacier.

Optional Upgrades:

GLACIER HELI HIKE (US\$350 pp)

The Franz Josef Glacier helicopter tour is a once in a lifetime experience that should not be missed. From the moment you step on board our chopper, your experience and the highly trained pilot will whisk you away, up and over the jaw-dropping landscape.

HELI ICE CLIMB (US\$422 pp)

The closest you can get to the Franz Josef Glacier. Glacier climbing in New Zealand is considered by many to be the best in the world, and no one does it better than Franz Josef Glacier Guides. Ice climbing at Franz Josef is a day packed with excitement and adventure, and we'll be with you every step of the way.

Day 13: Franz Josef -Queenstown, New Zealand

Franz Josef to Queenstown

Today you will leave Franz Josef behind and travel towards the Adventure Capital of New Zealand - Queenstown. This city is located in one of the most beautiful and attraction filled regions of New Zealand. Queenstown is located near the Lake Wakatipu and is surrounded by the Southern Alps. The most beautiful landscape is the sight of the Remarkables, which is a mountain range across the lake. Check into your accommodation and spend the evening at leisure.

Day 14: Queenstown, New Zealand

Milford Sound Day Tour

Today you will need to arrive to the meeting point on your own, to visit one of the world's most spectacular natural phenomena - Milford Sound.

You will leave Queenstown in a modern, comfortable bus that includes informative and entertaining commentary from experienced local guides, along the shores of the Lake Wakatipu and into southern farmland of Lake Te Anau. You will travel into the Fiordland National Park, enter the beautiful Eglinton Valley a place with gushing waterfalls and glacier valleys. Take the opportunity to catch breathtaking photos along the Milford Road, like the beautiful Mirror Lakes, where the surrounding mountain ranges perfectly reflect in the still waters, as well as, Knobs Flat, where glaciers have carved their mark on the terrain. As you drive along the road the glass roof bus will provide stunning views of the dramatic skyline. You will have a stop at Monkey Creek where you can taste some of the purest water in the world. Get back on the bus and travel through the Homer Tunnel, a 1,2km passageway through the mountains.

Once arrived to Milford Sound, hop onto Southern Discoveries Scenic Cruise and set off for nearly 2 hours of exploring the Eight Wonder of the World region. Travel into the Tasman sea, on your way passing by the glacier scarred rock walls and waterfalls that tumble through valleys and crash into the sea far below. You will have the chance to spot seals, penguins and dolphins along the way. During the cruise, the crew will entertain you with commentary on the natural history and wildlife of the area. The deck of your ship allows you to take beautiful pictures of the picturesque surroundings as you cruise through the waters.

After your cruise, return to Queenstown by bus and overnight.

Day 15: Queenstown, New Zealand

Queenstown Free Day

Today is free to enjoy yourself in Queenstown. There are so many things to see and do here, it's impossible to ever get bored! Some optional activities include:

SHOTOVER JET (US\$128 pp)

Prepare yourself for the ultimate Jet Boating experience with Shotover Jet - the unique, breathtaking white water ride and the adrenaline rush you'll never forget.

SKYDIVE QUEENSTOWN

-15,000ft - EXOSFEAR / 200KPH (US\$415 pp)

-12,000ft - STRATOSFEAR / 200KPH (US\$321 pp)

-9,000ft - TROPOSFEAR / 200KPH (US\$283 pp)

Day 16: Queenstown - Christchurch, New Zealand

Queenstown to Christchurch

Today we say goodbye to Queenstown and make the long journey to Christchurch where you will spend your last night. This trip takes between 8 & 9 hours and offers some incredible scenery along the way. On arrival check-in into your new accommodation and enjoy the rest of the day at leisure to relax and enjoy the southern New Zealand vibe.

Day 17: Christchurch, New Zealand

Christchurch Airport Drop-off

Today is your last day of the trip. Enjoy the morning in Christchurch before checking out of your accommodation in time to catch your return airport transfer, where this amazing adventure will come to an end.

