

New Zealand Travel

SUGGESTED ITINERARY

15 DAY NORTH ISLAND INDEPENDENT DRIVING & GOLF TOUR

DAY 1 Fly to Auckland. Emirates / EK412 / 08:45-14:00.

Pick up your rental car from the airport. **GO Rentals** – Toyota Previa ‘people mover’ (or alternative vehicle depending upon numbers). GO’s vehicles are late model, and their prices are very competitive.

You will stay in Auckland for 2 nights.

Accommodation – Auckland – Golden Chain motel units (or upgrade to Go Kiwi Hotels).

DAY 2 Auckland activities – Golf Day #1

Muriwai Golf Club is one of Auckland’s oldest, a true links course located on the coast of the Tasman Sea, close by to the famous gannet colony. It is also ranked in the top 20 courses in NZ. This is your first game of the Tour.

After golf, visit the black sand beaches around the gannet colony, and visit a few wineries in the Kumeu district of West Auckland before heading back to the city.

Accommodation – Auckland – Golden Chain motel units (or upgrade to Go Kiwi Hotels).

DAY 3 Drive to the *Northland* region (240kms / 3-4 hrs) via the *Twin Coast Discovery Route*. The Bay of Islands is the heart of the Northland region. Northland is known as the ‘Birthplace of the Nation’ – the original Maori and European explorers first landed in this region; the **Waitangi Treaty House** is located nearby – the important treaty between the English settlers and the Maori chiefs was signed here.

Northland activities. Besides important historical locations, there are great activities to choose from :

- ✓ tour to the top of the country with **Dune Rider’s Cape Reinga** adventure;
- ✓ Sail with Dolphin Discoveries – ‘**Discover The Bay**’ to the ‘Hole in the Rock’;
- ✓ experience Culture North’s great Waitangi Sound & Light Show at sunset;
- ✓ take the short ferry ride over to the historic town of Russell, the first permanent European settlement in the country (and known originally as the ‘Hell Hole of the Pacific’).

Accommodation – Paihia, Bay of Islands – Golden Chain motel units (or upgrade to Go Kiwi Hotels).

DAY 4 Bay of Islands activities – Golf Day #2

Waitangi Golf Club is one of the most scenic course in New Zealand, perched on the headland overlooking the Bay of Islands. When the wind blows, it can be a very tricky course.

In the afternoon, drive from Paihia over to the West Coast of Northland and the Hokianga (93kms / 1-1½hrs). Maori oral history records Kupe's first landing was on the shores of the Hokianga Harbour. Many small picturesque villages dot the Hokianga.

In the evening, experience the Lonely Planet award-winning activity of **Footprints Waipoua**. Kupe's descendants take you on a guided walk in the Twilight through the famous Waipoua Forest to see Tane Mahuta (the lord of the forest – 2000 yrs old) and Te Matua Ngahere (father of the forest – 4000 yrs old!). These night time tours are full of Maori myth and legend. **'Twilight Encounter'** is an experience that allows visitors to enter the Waipoua forest at a unique time - a time not experienced by many; a time when its inhabitants change; a time when seeing is replaced with listening and a time when the clouds and sun are replaced by stars and the moon.

Accommodation – Paihia, Bay of Islands – Golden Chain motel units (or upgrade to Go Kiwi Hotels).

DAY 5 In the morning, Sail with **Dolphin Discoveries – 'Discover The Bay'** to the 'Hole in the Rock'.

In the afternoon, drive back down to the Hibiscus Coast, to the town of Orewa. [For those very keen, Gulf Harbour Golf Course is nearby \(for a late game\).](#)

Accommodation – Orewa (or Auckland) – Golden Chain motel units (or upgrade to Go Kiwi Hotels).

DAY 6 Depart in the morning for the drive to the Central North Island Region of Rotorua (about 4hrs drive). Rotorua is the centrepiece of the North Island. **Nature's Spa / Warm Spirit of a Living Culture / Incredible Earth Forces** are all found in Rotorua-Taupo. Instead of taking the straight route, you can also take a detour through Waitomo Caves (a visit to [Ruakuri Caves](#) is special), or for the Lord of The Rings fans, stop at Matamata and explore the **Hobbiton Village** filming site where some of the Hobbit Holes remain.

In the evening, join **Tamaki Maori Village – 'Journey of Ages'**. Travel back in time to a pre-European village and experience customs and traditions of Maori through song, dance and spiritual stories (a past winner of the prestigious Supreme Tourism Award). You will travel as a 'tribe' to the Village and experience a complete cultural tour including a Hangi meal (not to be missed!).

Accommodation – Rotorua – Golden Chain motel units (or upgrade to Go Kiwi Hotels).

DAY 7 Rotorua activities – Golf Day #3

Arikikapakapa Rotorua Golf Club is one of the more interesting courses because of the natural geothermal hazards. It is a relatively flat course, but as it is right near the centre of town, you can head off to the geothermal areas after a morning's golf.

Some of the many activities to see in Rotorua include:

- ✓ Rotorua Museum
- ✓ Skyline Gondola
- ✓ Te Puia Thermal Reserve & Maori Arts and Crafts Institute

- ✓ Rainbow Springs / Kiwi Encounter
- ✓ Kawarau Jetboat Rotorua
- ✓ Wai-O-Tapu Geothermal Wonderland (Lady Knox Geyser erupts 10:15am daily)
- ✓ Waimangu Volcanic Valley
- ✓ Hidden Valley of Orakei Korako
- ✓ **New Zealand Riverjet Thermal Safari** (half day tour down the Waikato River by jetboat to Orakei Korako)
- ✓ Agrodome Leisure Park (home to the famous Sheep Show)
- ✓ Polynesian Spa
- ✓ **Hells Gate / Wai Ora Spa** (great combination of geothermal reserve and mud bath treatments).

Accommodation – Rotorua – Golden Chain motel units (or upgrade to Go Kiwi Hotels).

DAY 8 Drive down to Taupo from Rotorua (1hr) - Golf Day #4

Wairakei Golf Club is ranked in the top 5 New Zealand courses. Peter Thompson was one of the original designers and it is a good test of golf no matter what your handicap.

In the afternoon, visit Huka Falls or one of the geothermal places listed above.

Accommodation – Taupo – Golden Chain motel units (or upgrade to Go Kiwi Hotels).

DAY 9 Drive from Taupo to Hawke's Bay / Napier (140kms / 2-2½hrs). Napier is an historic city with some of the world's best examples of Art Deco architecture and Hawke's Bay is one of the major wine growing areas in the country. The **Art Deco Trust** guided walking tour is a must do – or take a special guided tour in a vintage car).

Accommodation – Napier – Golden Chain motel units (or upgrade to Go Kiwi Hotels).

DAY 10 Hawke's Bay Activities – Golf Day #5

Play at either Napier or Hastings Golf Club. Both are old, well established clubs. Hastings is consistently ranked in the top 20 courses of New Zealand.

In the afternoon, continue to enjoy the delights of the Hawke's Bay region. Places to visit include:

- ✓ Gannet Safari Tour – at Cape Kidnappers
- ✓ Silky Oak Chocolate Company (for all chocolate lovers)
- ✓ Classic Sheepskins
- ✓ Wine Tours – of all types and many wineries to visit.
- ✓ **Odyssey Progressive Dinner Tour** (be driven to 3 different wineries and enjoy the combination of good food and specially selected wines).
- ✓ National Aquarium of New Zealand
- ✓ Arataki Honey
- ✓ Ocean Spa (located on Marine Parade facing the ocean).

Accommodation – Napier – Golden Chain motel units (or upgrade to Go Kiwi Hotels).

DAY 11 Drive from Napier to Wellington (320kms / 4-5 hrs).

Activities in the Wellington area include the following :

- ✓ Stop at the Mount Bruce National Wildlife Centre (40kms north of Masterton).

- ✓ Visit Zealandia: Karori Sanctuary Experience (a 'predator free' environment for birdlife – visit in late afternoon when the birds return to their roosts)
- ✓ **Te Papa** ('my place') is the unique and fantastic national museum of New Zealand; and worth spending at least a couple hours.
- ✓ Visit the Seal colony down at the South Coast.
- ✓ Drive to the top of Mt Victoria for the views.
- ✓ Ride the Cable Car from Lambton Quay to the top of the Botanic Gardens.
- ✓ **Flat Earth Experiences** offer a variety of small group tours – Wild Wellington; Capital Arts; Maori Treasures; City Highlights 'Inspiration'; Middle Earth Filming Locations.

Accommodation – Wellington – Golden Chain motel units (or upgrade to Go Kiwi Hotels).

DAY 12 Wellington Activities – Golf Day #6

Paraparaumu Golf Club is a links course about 40 mins north of Wellington, but was put on the world golfing map ten years ago when Tiger Woods played there in the New Zealand Open. It is ranked as the 3rd best course in NZ.

Accommodation – Wellington – Golden Chain motel units (or upgrade to Go Kiwi Hotels).

DAY 13 Start your drive back up North to the Taranaki Region and the city of New Plymouth (about 4½hrs). Ever-changing Mount Taranaki, vivid black sand surf beaches, gardens of national and international significance, activities from alpine treks to golf courses, and a rich history from volcanic inception through bloody land wars to pioneering innovation – New Zealand's undiscovered Taranaki region has something for everyone :

- ✓ Puke Ariki - best place to start to discover how the forces of nature shaped the region
- ✓ Tawhiti Museum – Traders & Whalers, located in the town of Hawera
- ✓ Govett Brewster Art Gallery
- ✓ Pukeiti, Tupare and Holland Gardens; Te Kainga Marire – a Garden of International Significance
- ✓ Mount Taranaki – Dawson Falls and The Goblin Forest
- ✓ New Plymouth Coastal Walkway – 11km walking and cycling path along the Tasman Sea
- ✓ Surf Highway 45
- ✓ Forgotten World Highway – traces an ancient Maori trail from the central North Island around Mount Ruapehu to the heart of the Taranaki.

Accommodation – New Plymouth – Golden Chain motel units (or upgrade to Go Kiwi Hotels).

DAY 14 Taranaki Activities – Golf Day #7

New Plymouth Golf Club – Ngamotu Links is ranked in the top 20 of New Zealand courses. Close to the centre of town, it is a links course running down to the coast with stunning views.

Accommodation – New Plymouth – Golden Chain motel units (or upgrade to Go Kiwi Hotels).

DAY 15 Leaving Day. The drive from New Plymouth to Auckland Airport will take approx 4½hrs (350kms). Return your rental car to the Airport Depot.

Fly to Sydney. Emirates / EK413 / 18:40-20:05.