

## New Zealand Guided Tours

### Rail Coach Tour

**Operator:** Grand Pacific Tours

**Days:** 19

**Start:** Auckland

**Finish:** Christchurch

**Our price:** Check [www.experiencenz.com](http://www.experiencenz.com)

**Enquiries:** Email [travel@experiencenz.com](mailto:travel@experiencenz.com)



### Overview

This is a particularly popular tour designed specifically for rail enthusiasts to enjoy the best of New Zealand at a relaxed pace. The all-inclusive tour incorporates five scenic rail journeys, three spectacular cruises (including an exclusive overnight tour in the Bay of Islands), and a Cook Strait ferry crossing between the North and South Islands.

### Highlights

- Glenbrook vintage railway
- Taieri Gorge Limited rail journey
- Christchurch Tramway
- TranzCoastal rail journey
- TranzAlpine rail journey
- Waitangi Treaty House grounds
- Bay of Islands overnight cruise
- Interislander ferry
- Rotorua Skyline Gondola, luge ride, Agrodome, thermal mud pools and geysers
- Kauri, Southwards Car, and Lake Districts museums
- Longlands Dairy Farm and Paradise Valley Springs
- Olveston House and haggis ceremony
- Larnach Castle and Glenfalloch Woodland Gardens
- Cruise Lake Wakatipu on the TSS Earnslaw
- Milford Sound cruise
- Te Anau glow worm caves
- City sights tours of Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch

## Tour itinerary

**B** = Breakfast   **L** = Lunch   **D** = Dinner

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### Day 1: Auckland

Fly into Auckland where you will be met by a Grand Pacific Tours representative and transferred to your hotel.

*Accommodation:* Copthorne Hotel HarbournCity

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### Day 2: Auckland – Bay of Islands

Depart Auckland and travel to the Parry Kauri Park to see a magnificent example of a Kauri Tree. Enjoy a visit and informative talk at the Kauri Museum in Matakoho, then travel via Whangarei to Paihia, situated in the heart of the beautiful Bay of Islands. Explore a guided tour of the Waitangi Treaty Grounds, the location of the signing of the treaty between the Maori tribes and the British. **B, D**

*Accommodation:* Scenic Hotel Bay of Islands

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### Day 3: Bay of Islands Overnight Cruise

A memorable day lies ahead of you today. After breakfast you are free to explore Paihia before boarding the Great Sights brand new luxurious catamaran for your overnight cruise in the beautiful Bay of Islands. Cruise past spectacular landmarks, such as the Black Rocks and Urupukapuka Island before being anchored at sea for a truly exclusive experience. You will be surrounded by nature, as the warm waters are home to an abundance of marine life such as dolphins, whales, seals and penguins. Tenders will ferry you to nearby islands as you learn of the rich history and ecology associated with this region. At sunset enjoy a buffet of local cuisine before retiring to your stateroom that has sea views. **B, D**

*Accommodation:* Great Sights cruise boat

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### Day 4: Bay of Islands – Auckland

After a unique overnight stay, start the day with a leisurely breakfast before you cruise back to Opuha Wharf mid-morning. Farewell the Bay of Islands and drive south via Whangarei, Wellsford and Warkworth to Auckland. Enjoy a short city tour and free time before transferring to your hotel. **B, D**

*Accommodation:* Copthorne Hotel HarbournCity

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### Day 5: Auckland – Rotorua

Depart Auckland and travel to Glenbrook Vintage Railway for a nostalgic 12 kilometre trip back in time on a beautifully restored vintage steam train. Visit the restoration workshop and on return to Glenbrook Station, morning tea will be served. Depart Glenbrook and travel through magnificent countryside to Longlands Dairy Farm. Enjoy a farm tour followed by a delicious home cooked lunch. This afternoon continue to Rotorua and visit Paradise Valley Springs, a superb wildlife park where you can hand feed rainbow trout. **B, L, D**

*Accommodation:* Sudima Hotel (1<sup>st</sup> of 2 nights)

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### Day 6: Rotorua

Today begins with a Gondola ride to Skyrides Restaurant where a buffet breakfast and spectacular views are on offer. Travel to the Agrodome where you see performing sheep, a

shearing display and sheep dog trial. Enjoy some free time this afternoon before travelling out to see the boiling mud pools and awesome Geysers that Rotorua is famous for. This evening you will experience an entertaining Maori Hangi and Concert. **B, D**

*Accommodation:* Sudima Hotel (2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 7: Rotorua – Wellington**

Depart Rotorua and travel along the Thermal Explorer Highway before arriving at the spectacular Huka Falls. Continue to Lake Taupo where some free time is available to enjoy this scenic lakeside town. This afternoon travel via the Tongariro National Park and see the snow capped peaks of Mt Ruapehu and Mt Tongariro. Visit the Southwards Car Museum, home to the most comprehensive collection of veteran and vintage cars in the southern hemisphere. Afternoon tea will be enjoyed before continuing south along the Kapiti Coast to Wellington, New Zealand's capital. **B, D**

*Accommodation:* James Cook Grand Chancellor (1<sup>st</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 8: Wellington**

An extensive city sights tour this morning will highlight Wellington's tremendous history and culture. This afternoon enjoy free time. You may choose to visit Te Papa, New Zealand's National Museum or consider other options available. **B, D**

*Accommodation:* James Cook Grand Chancellor (2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 9: Wellington – Christchurch**

This morning board the Interislander Ferry, cross Cook Strait and travel through the Marlborough Sounds to Picton. Join the TranzCoastal, a truly spectacular rail journey that links the port of Picton to Christchurch and travels through vineyards, salt mountains and river valleys before following the thin wedge of land between the Pacific Ocean and the Kaikoura Ranges. Continue across the farmlands of the Northern Canterbury Plains to the garden city of Christchurch. **B, D**

*Accommodation:* Copthorne Durham Street or Heartland Hotel Cotswold (1<sup>st</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 10: Christchurch**

This morning enjoy a city tour of Christchurch. This afternoon is free and we have arranged for you to travel on the Christchurch Tramway which is the best way to visit all the 'Must See' sights. **B, D**

*Accommodation:* Copthorne Durham Street or Heartland Hotel Cotswold (2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 11: Christchurch – Dunedin**

Depart Christchurch and travel south through Oamaru to Dunedin, a well preserved Victorian city. Enjoy a city sights tour including a visit to Olveston House, a prestigious historic home and tonight a Scottish evening will be presented complete with bagpipes, great food, Haggis Ceremony and gift. **B, D**

*Accommodation:* Mercure Leisure Lodge (1<sup>st</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 12: Dunedin**

Travel along the Otago Peninsula to Larnach Castle where you enjoy a guided tour. Next visit Glenfalloch Woodland Gardens, view the superb collection of flowers followed by a

delightful morning tea. Return to the city where free time is available before boarding The Taieri Gorge Limited for a journey through spectacular scenery only accessible by rail. Grand examples of Victorian stonework on bridges and tunnels, plus iron latticework viaducts can be seen along with breathtaking views as you travel to Pukerangi. On return to Dunedin's historic Edwardian Railway Station your coach will transfer you to your hotel. **B, D**  
*Accommodation:* Mercure Leisure Lodge (2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 13: Dunedin – Te Anau**

Travel to Te Anau, the gateway to Fiordland and visit the Te Anau Glow Worm Caves. Admire the incredible limestone caverns, waterfalls and mystery of the Glow Worm Grotto before arriving at your hotel. **B, D**  
*Accommodation:* Distinction Luxmore Hotel (1<sup>st</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 14: Te Anau – Milford Sound – Te Anau**

This morning enjoy a fascinating drive to Milford Sound where you board your launch for a cruise on this magnificent fiord. See the spectacular Bowen Falls and towering Mitre Peak as you enjoy a picnic lunch. This afternoon return to Te Anau where some free time is available. **B, L, D**  
*Accommodation:* Distinction Luxmore Hotel (2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 15: Te Anau – Queenstown**

A leisurely start to the day before travelling to Fairlight where you board The Kingston Flyer for a rail journey behind a Pacific AB Class Locomotive. On arrival at Kingston a barbecue lunch with sparkling wine will be served. Travel to Arrowtown, an old gold mining village and visit the Lakes District Museum. Continue to Queenstown, a year round resort situated on the shores of magical Lake Wakatipu. This evening board the vintage steamship TSS Earnslaw and cruise across Lake Wakatipu to Walter Peak Station. On arrival sit back and relax, as you are treated to the best of New Zealand's high country cuisine in the Colonel's Homestead. After dinner enjoy a short farm tour then reboard the TSS Earnslaw for a sing along by the piano as you cruise back to Queenstown. **B, D**  
*Accommodation:* Mercure Resort (1<sup>st</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 16: Queenstown**

Today is a free day. There are plenty of sightseeing options and your Coach Captain is available to assist. This evening is also free. You may choose to dine out at one of the many fine restaurants. **B**  
*Accommodation:* Mercure Resort (2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 17: Queenstown – Franz Josef**

Travel via the Haast Pass to the West Coast, an area of stunning beauty. See the snow capped peaks of the Southern Alps as you travel north to Fox Glacier. Experience a scenic flight (optional, weather permitting) over the spectacular glaciers before continuing to Franz Josef. **B, D**  
*Accommodation:* Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier

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### **Day 18: Franz Josef – Christchurch**

Travel to Hokitika, famous for its greenstone, then continue to Greymouth where you board the TranzAlpine, renowned as one of the great train journeys of the world. Travel through lush beech forest, skirt lakes and follow rivers till you climb through the Otira Tunnel to Arthur's Pass in the centre of the Southern Alps. Descend through spectacular gorges, river valleys and over massive viaducts before completing your journey at Christchurch. This evening enjoy a special farewell dinner including musical entertainment with your new found friends. **B, D**

*Accommodation:* Copthorne Durham Street or Heartland Hotel Cotswold

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### **Day 19: Christchurch**

Time to say goodbye. You will be transferred to the airport for your flight home after a great holiday. **B**

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