



7 Day North Island Steam Explorer



Tour Summary

Tour name: North Island Steam Explorer

Days: 7

Tour Includes:

- All accommodation, transfers and breakfast
- 3 dinners: Auckland, Grand Chateau, Wellington
- Half-day sightseeing tour of Auckland
- Sightseeing tour and cable car journey in Wellington
- Steam Train travel between Auckland and Wellington
- NZ\$100.00 worth of catering vouchers to be used on the steam train
- 250 Excursion Points to use on various other excursions

Tour Itinerary

Sunday/Monday: Auckland

We welcome you with a special dinner on Sunday night and a half day sightseeing tour the next morning. You'll have two days to enjoy New Zealand's largest city. This subtropical multicultural city has a great deal to offer visitors and we have lots of optional activities for you to choose from:

Cruise on the Hauraki Gulf or Sail an America's Cup yacht. Take a sightseeing tour, see a Maori Cultural Experience, visit a winery or museum or if you arrive earlier you can take advantage of our overnight excursions to the beautiful Bay of Islands or the Thermal Wonderland of Rotorua.

Railfans will enjoy The Museum of Transport and Technology, and the Glenbrook Vintage Railway, considered by many to be New Zealand's premier steam railway.

In Auckland you'll stay at a centrally located hotel or keen railfans have the option to stay at the magnificent old Auckland Railway Station which has been converted into self contained student accommodation.

Tuesday: Your Steam Journey Begins: Auckland – Tongariro National Park

We'll depart from Auckland's historic old Railway station and travel south via the Auckland waterfront, through the fertile farmland of the Waikato. We'll follow the mighty Waikato River to Waitomo, where you can visit live Kiwis or tour the incredible limestone formations of the Waitomo Caves. Then we'll follow the Main Trunk Line through the King Country before travelling up one of New Zealand's most impressive engineering feats: the Raurimu Spiral. We traverse the Central Volcanic Plateau affording magnificent views of the three volcanoes used to portray Mordor and Mount Doom in the Lord of the Rings movies. We'll stay and have dinner tonight at the beautiful and historic Grand Chateau Hotel on the slopes of Mt Ruapehu.

Wednesday: Tongariro National Park to Palmerston North

This morning you could play golf, tennis or croquet or visit the excellent Department of Conservation Visitor Centre. If you start early you have time to take the chairlift right to the top of the Mt Ruapehu ski runs.

Later in the morning we'll drive to the ski town of Ohakune, or you can take the optional spectacular flight over the mountains. Once on board the train, we'll travel the many spectacular viaducts of the Rangitikei Valley before descending to the Manawatu.

Then it's on to Feilding for railfans to visit the Feilding Steam Rail home of one of New Zealand's most recently restored steam locomotives.

Home for tonight is the capital of the central North Island, Palmerston North.

Thursday: Palmerston North to Wellington via Wairarapa

Today we'll travel through the magnificent Manawatu Gorge before heading south across the Wairarapa region. It's one of the country's premier wine regions and you may choose to wander around the town of Masterton or you can take either the Martinborough Wine Trail tour or a Wairarapa Gardens Tour.

For railfans, we stop en route at the Pahiatua Railcar Museum and when we get to Masterton have an excursion to the Fell Museum home of the unique and historic locomotive that used to climb the very steep Rimutaka Incline using the "Fell" system.

Heading south, we'll pass through the Hutt Valley and finish today's journey at Wellington's grand old Railway Station.

We'll be staying for two nights right in the heart of the capital.

Friday: Wellington

Today you can choose from a wide range of excursions. We particularly recommend spending time at Te Papa, the bold and imaginative National Museum of New Zealand.

For railfans a whole day excursion is organised to include the depots of Mainline Steam, Steam Incorporated, The Wellington Tramway Museum and the Silverstream Railway.

On our final evening in Wellington we'll celebrate a very special dinner to farewell those leaving the North Island Steam Explorer and welcome those joining us for the South Island Steam Explorer. We will take a trip up the city's historic cable car to Kelburn and have dinner at the top of the peak where you can take in the stunning views of Wellington harbour at sunset.