



18 Day New Zealand Grand Rail Discovery



Tour Summary

Tour name: New Zealand Grand Rail Discovery

Days: 18

Tour Overview

The Evergreen Difference

- Journey through the Karangahake Gorge on Goldfields Railway
- Explore at your own pace on the Christchurch Historic Tramway
- Experience the warmth of the local people with a 'Home Stay' opportunity in Dunedin

Tour Highlights

- Travel along New Zealand's volcanic plateau on the Overlander rail journey
- Enjoy a spectacular coastal journey on the TranzCoastal train
- Journey through the Southern Alps on the TranzAlpine rail
- Ride the Kingston Flyer fully restored vintage steam train
- Travel by rail through the rugged and spectacular Taieri River Gorge
- Cruise the magnificent glacier carved fiords of Milford Sound
- Experience a traditional Maori cultural concert and Hangi feast.
- Glide across Lake Wakatipu on the nostalgic TSS Earnslaw steamship, followed by dinner at Walter Peak High Country Station
- Enjoy a Gondola ride and dine with views over Rotorua
- Visit the awesome Franz Josef Glacier
- Cruise between the north and south islands, through the spectacular Marlborough Sounds
- Travel to World Heritage Mt Cook National Park
- Delight in a scenic 'Hole in the Rock' cruise
- See the bubbling mud pools at Te Puia Thermal Reserve
- View the Church of the Good Shepherd, situated on the edge of Lake Tekapo
- Discover New Zealand's history at the Waitangi Treaty Grounds
- Be entertained by sheep and farm dog trials at the Agrodome farm show
- Tour the historic Kauri & Pioneer Museum
- Marvel at the unique Moeraki Boulders

Inclusive Value

- New Zealand specialist Tour Director and Coach Captain
- 7 scenic rail journeys included throughout New Zealand
- 17 nights first class accommodation including relaxing 2 night stays in Auckland, Bay of Islands, Rotorua, Queenstown & Christchurch.
- 29 quality meals including 17 breakfasts and 12 dinners

Tour Itinerary

Day 1: Auckland

Welcome to New Zealand! You will be met upon arrival and transferred to your hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure.

Two Night Stay: Rydges Auckland Hotel.

Day 2: Auckland Tour (BD)

This morning enjoy a tour of the city including the Domain, Viaduct Harbour, Auckland Museum, Parnell and Devonport. This afternoon is at leisure. Tonight enjoy a welcome dinner at your hotel.

Day 3: Kauri Museum - Treaty House - Bay of Islands (BD)

Journey north to view the imposing Kauri Tree before continuing on to the Kauri Pioneer Museum. Arrive at the Bay of Islands for a guided tour, then visit the historic Waitangi Treaty Grounds, home to New Zealand's founding document as a nation. Opportunity tonight or tomorrow night to enjoy a Culture North Night Show (own expense).

Two Night Stay: Kingsgate Hotel Autolodge

Day 4: Bay of Islands (B)

Today is free to relax or to explore this picturesque and historical area at your own pace. Your Tour Director will assist with suggestions (optional activities at own expense).

Day 5: 'Hole in the Rock' Cruise - Auckland (B)

This morning cruise through the scenic waters of the Bay of Islands to Cape Brett Lighthouse and through the famous 'Hole in the Rock' (weather permitting). Rejoin the coach and enjoy the scenic return journey to Auckland.

Overnight Stay: Rydges Auckland Hotel

Day 6: Goldfields Railway – Rotorua - Maori Hangi (BD)

Journey to the top of Mt Eden, Auckland's highest extinct volcano, then head southward to Goldfields Railway. This vintage train will carry through the upper reaches of the stunning Karangahake Gorge. Continue on to Mt Maunganui before arriving in Rotorua the heartland of New Zealand's Maori culture. Tonight you will be entertained at a traditional Maori cultural performance followed by a Hangi feast.

Two Night Stay: Rydges Rotorua Hotel.

Day 7: Gondola Ride - Thermal Reserve (B)

This morning enjoy a Gondola ride up to Skyline Restaurant for breakfast. After breakfast continue on to the Agrodome for an entertaining show of sheep shearing and farm dog trials, then visit the bubbling mud pools and thermal geyser at the amazing Te Puia Thermal Valley and the Maori Arts and Craft Institute. The rest of the afternoon is at leisure.

Day 8: Overlander Train – Raurimu Spiral - Wellington (BD)

Journey to Taumaranui and board the Overlander for a magnificent afternoon's journey up the famous Raurimu Spiral, onto New Zealand's awesome volcanic plateau. After the 'drop', the route becomes green and lush again. See the dramatic white cliffs and viaducts of the Rangitekei River and closer to Wellington, view Kapiti Island and the exquisite coastline.

Overnight Stay: Mercure Hotel.

Day 9: Marlborough Sounds – TranzCoastal Train - Christchurch (BD)

Cruise through the picturesque Marlborough and Queen Charlotte Sounds to the south island. On arrival in Picton board the TranzCoastal train for one of New Zealand's most spectacular coastal journeys! Hugging the Kaikoura Coast, the train passes scenic vineyards, salt mountains and river valleys, a visual feast.

Overnight Stay: Grand Chancellor Hotel.

Day 10: TranzAlpine Rail - Franz Josef & Fox Glacier (BD)

Today's touring takes you for an unforgettable rail journey through the magnificent Southern Alps on the TranzAlpine. Disembark at Arthurs Pass and continue on to Hokitika to see skilled craftsmen carving Pounamu (Jade). Its then on to view the awesome Franz Josef Glacier. Opportunity to experience a scenic helicopter flight with snow landing (own expense and weather permitting).

Overnight Stay: Scenic Circle Fox Glacier Country Hotel

Day 11: Haast Valley – Arrowtown - Queenstown (BD)

Travel through sub-tropical rainforest to Haast Pass. Visit popular Arrowtown, a quaint and historic gold mining town. Continue on to picturesque Queenstown and your hotel overlooking beautiful Lake Wakatipu and the Remarkables mountain range.

Two Night Stay: Mercure Resort, Lakeview Rooms.

Day 12: Queenstown Free Day - TSS Earnslaw Cruise & Dinner (BD)

Today is free to explore at your own pace. Your Tour Director will assist with suggestions (optional activities at own expense). Late this afternoon cruise Lake Wakatipu on the vintage steamship TSS Earnslaw. Enjoy wine tasting and dinner at Walter Peak High Country Station followed by a short farm tour.

Day 13: Kingston Flyer - Milford Sound Cruise - Te Anau (BD)

Join the Kingston Flyer, New Zealand's fully restored famous vintage steam train, for magnificent views of Lake Wakatipu and the fascinating alpine desert. Rejoin the coach in Fairlight and travel to Te Anau, gateway to Fiordland National Park. This afternoon you will experience an unforgettable cruise on Milford Sound.

Overnight Stay: Luxmore Hotel.

Day 14: Taieri Gorge Rail Journey - Dunedin (BD)

Journey to Dunedin, a university city of Scottish heritage and New Zealand's oldest city. This afternoon join the Taieri Gorge for a scenic rail journey through Central Otago. *Opportunity to experience the warmth of the local people during a one night 'Home Stay'. Included in the tour at no extra cost. Must be pre-booked.*

Overnight Stay: Kingsgate Hotel.

Day 15: Moeraki Boulders - Omarama (BD)

This morning depart Dunedin for Omarama, en-route visit the intriguing Moeraki Boulders.

Overnight Stay: Heritage Gateway Hotel.

Day 16: Mt Cook National Park - Lake Tekapo - Christchurch (BD)

Pass picturesque Lake Pukaki, then stop and view Mount Cook (weather permitting). Continue on to visit Lake Tekapo and the Church of the Good Shepherd, and then on to Christchurch for a sightseeing tour. Tonight enjoy a farewell dinner at your hotel.

Two Night Stay: Grand Chancellor Hotel.

Day 17: Christchurch Historic Tram (B)

Today is free to enjoy this beautiful city at your own pace on the Christchurch historic tram. This beautifully restored heritage tram follows an inner city route providing an entertaining and informative tour of the most interesting and historic city sights. Choose to hop on and off as you like to explore the city further.

Day 18: Christchurch - Homeport (B)

After breakfast transfer to the airport for your flight home. It's "haere ra" (goodbye) to New Zealand.

Key (B: breakfast; L: lunch; D: dinner)