

THE 'SPIRIT OF AOTEAROA' Tour

New Zealand is a haven for lovers of natural beauty. You will find a sample of all that we can find on this planet within our shores. The time has come for you to experience this phenomenon yourself.

"All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us."~ Gandalf, 'The Lord of the Rings'.

We offer you a tour that embraces both the natural beauty and the spirituality that makes New Zealand so unique. Let us show you never ending beaches, mighty kauri trees still growing after 2,000 years, glaciers, pristine rain forests, deep gorges, spectacular mountains, lakes - and pure rivers and streams that you can drink from.

There will also be an opportunity for you to meet the indigenous Maori people, whose cultural and spiritual beliefs urge them to assume the role of kaitiaki ~ guardians of our natural environment. Their aim is to live in balance with the plants, animals, soil, air, water and each other, to guarantee a sustainable and rich future for following generations - something we should all aspire to.

Cost: Single \$5,895 NZD or Twin share \$4,325 NZD per person

Cost Includes:

13 nights' accommodation, 5 breakfasts and one dinner

All land transport and guiding

Overnight cruise Bay of Islands

Tour of Waitangi Treaty Grounds, Tour into the Waipoua Kauri Forest with Maori guides, Whale watch cruise in Kaikoura and Maori Tour in Kaikoura.

Tour Dates:

A minimum of 6 passengers required. The dates can be arranged to suit your particular needs. Facebook would be a good place to form your groups.

THE ITINERARY:

Day 1.

Arrive in Auckland. We will meet your flight and transfer you to the Spencer on Byron Hotel. Tonight you meet your fellow travelers over dinner.

Day 2.

We travel north along the east coast to Paihia, in the Bay of Islands. After lunch we board the luxury launch "Ipiripiri", (32 ensuite twin /double bedrooms), for an overnight cruise within the Bay. There is an opportunity for island walks and kayaking. There is also the possibility of sighting dolphins and orcas. <www.overnightcruise.co.nz>

Day 3.

Our vessel returns to port late morning. We check into our hotel and take a tour of the Waitangi Treaty grounds and Marae, with a local Maori guide. <www.waitangi.net.nz>

Day 4.

Depart early today for a coach trip to the northernmost tip of New Zealand - Cape Reinga. This is an area of spiritual significance to Maori people. Later, as we return to Paihia, you can toboggan down huge sand dunes and enjoy the drive along 90 Mile Beach. Go to <www.dolphincruises.co.nz> and click on Cape Reinga.

Day 5.

Today we cross to the west coast. Our hotel is on the shores of the entrance to the Hokianga Harbour - the landing place for the first of the Maori explorers - Kupe. This evening we take a tour into the giant kauri forest with local Maori guides who share their knowledge of the flora and fauna, their legends and take us to see the 2,000 year old Kauri tree, Tane Mahuta, 'Lord of the Forest'. <www.footprintswaipoua.com>

Day 6.

This morning we travel south to Auckland and board our flight to Christchurch in the South Island.

Day 7.

The road north brings us to the seaside township of Kaikoura. This afternoon we take a tour with Maori guides who keep you spellbound with knowledge of their beliefs, customs and local history.

<www.maoritours.co.nz> Anyone feel like a seafood dinner? Crayfish a specialty here!

Day 8.

Today we take the early morning cruise with 'Whale watch' - an experience not to be missed. <www.whalewatch.co.nz>

This afternoon we return to Christchurch.

Day 9.

Today our travels take us through the Southern Alps via Arthur's Pass to the township of Punakaiki, on the West Coast. Accommodation for tonight and tomorrow night - the Punakaiki Resort - a superb beachfront location. <www.punakaiki-resort.co.nz>

Day 10.

Time to marvel at the unique and fascinating pancake rocks, formed 30 million years ago. Later we explore the virgin rainforests that surround the area.

Day 11.

The Southern Coastal Road takes us to the glaciers - Franz Josef and Fox. En route we recommend a 'rainforest adventure' with White Heron Nature Tours.

<www.whiteherontours.co.nz>

Accommodation tonight - The Bella Vista Motel, Fox Glacier.

Day 12.

Take a helicopter flight with Fox Heliservices and enjoy aerial views of Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers as well as Mt Cook and Mt Gunn, (used in the lighting of the beacons scenes in 'Lord of the Rings'.) <www.glacierhelicopters.co.nz>

Day 13.

The ultimate day of our tour takes us further south, through the spectacular Haast Pass to the jewel in the crown of New Zealand's South Island ~ Queenstown.

Day 14.

Your option now - to stay on in Queenstown and enjoy the multitude of activities and cafes in the area, or take your leave, via Queenstown Airport.
Optional extras available, just ask Vic.

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