

# 10 DAY NEW ZEALAND RAIL ESCAPE

## DESTINATIONS

---



## TOUR ITINERARY

### DAY 1

Destination	Auckland
Meals included	
Hotel	4 ★ Copthorne Auckland City, or similar

Welcome to Auckland. On arrival, please make your way to your hotel for check-in. The rest of the day is at leisure to get acquainted with this vibrant city.

Auckland's diverse landscapes provide endless sightseeing opportunities. You may wish to arrive earlier and explore the city and its surrounding on any of the below optional activities. Each of these activities require an extra night of accommodation and we can assist you to arrange any and all of them.

#### AUCKLAND CITY SIGHTS MORNING TOUR AND SKY TOWER

Experience the best of Auckland's city highlights with a half-day scenic tour, followed by a trip up the famous Auckland Sky Tower.

Travel around the city centre and over the Auckland Harbour Bridge with its stunning views of the harbour and city skyline. Visit the Viaduct Harbour and Auckland's famous Queen Street, and enjoy the lush grounds of the Auckland Domain, the city's oldest park.

Your tour will pause for morning tea (own expense) in charming Parnell Village, where historic buildings house an interesting range of boutique shops. The tour continues along the waterfront to the Michael Joseph Savage Memorial Park, named after a much-respected Prime Minister of New Zealand. With panoramic views of the harbour and beautiful formal gardens, it's a great spot to take photos.

After a scenic trip back along Tamaki Drive to the city, arrive at Auckland's Sky Tower, the tallest man-made structure in New Zealand at 328 metres high. Prepare yourself for breathtaking 360 degree views from the observation deck of this Auckland landmark. On a clear day you'll be able to gaze as far as 80 kilometres in all directions – it's the perfect way to get to know the city of Auckland and its surroundings.

**Useful info:** Please note there is no hotel drop-off service following the Sky Tower. You are at leisure to spend as much time at the Sky Tower as you wish.

#### WAITOMO & ROTORUA DAY TOUR

Travel south from Auckland through the rich farmland of the Waikato and King Country to arrive at the renowned Waitomo Glowworm Caves and take a guided tour. Continue on to Rotorua - a light lunch is served whilst onboard. On arrival in Rotorua visit the agrodome, the famous Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve and the Maori Arts and Crafts Institute. Return to Auckland - an afternoon snack is served en route.

**Duration:** This trip starts at 07.30am and returns at 08.10pm

**Inclusions:** Hotel pick up and drop off; light lunch on board coach; morning snack

## TOUR ITINERARY

### HOBBITON AND WAITOMO TOUR

Travel south from Auckland over the Bombay Hills to the rich farmland of the Waikato region. Your journey takes you through undulating green hills reminding you that you are approaching The Shire. Your Bush and Beach guide will give you commentary on the way to Hobbiton with insights into the areas you are travelling through, along with some background to the movies.


On arrival at Shire's Rest you embark on your Hobbiton movie set tour. This location is the largest "green set" in the world and the only part of the set remaining in New Zealand. You see 44 hobbit holes, the Mill and the Party Tree. At this stunning location you can take a photo at the gate to Bilbo's house, "Bag End", looking out over the whole set to the hills in the distance. The tour ends with a visit to the Green Dragon Inn for a drink. Following your drink, you will be treated to a sumptuous buffet lunch in the marquee. There is time for shopping before your tour continues to Waitomo. (Drive time 1 hr 20min).

On arrival in Waitomo, join a 45 minute guided tour of the incredible Waitomo Glow Worm caves. Discover an ancient world 30 million years in the making. Enjoy the delicate cave formations and be wowed in the Cathedral, before taking the iconic boat ride through the glow worm grotto (subject to water levels). Marvel in silence at thousands of magical glow worms, which are unique to New Zealand before exiting the cave.

**Duration:** This tour departs at 07.00am and returns at 06.45pm

**Inclusions:** Hotel pick up and drop off; guided tour of Hobbiton movie set and lunch at the Party marquee; Ale, cider or ginger beer at Green Dragon Inn; Hobbiton souvenir voucher; Guided Tour in Waitomo Caves Glow worm Tour

### DAY 2

Destination	Auckland  Wellington
Meals included	
Hotel	4 ★ Distinction Wellington, or similar

Today make your way to Auckland central station to board the Northern Explorer. New Zealand's longest running passenger service, the Northern Explorer is a long distance scenic train service running between Auckland and Wellington, stopping at Palmerston North, Ohakune, National Park and Hamilton. This iconic train journey allows you to experience the extremes of New Zealand's scenery, from the fertile farmlands of Waikato to the volcanic peaks of the Central Plateau and the sparkling Kapiti coast.

The train has panoramic windows, open-air view carriage, a fully licenced cafe plus commentary allowing you to connect with the histories, legends and myths of New Zealand.

On arrival in Wellington, disembark your scenic train and make your way to your hotel. We recommend a short taxi service which can be found easily when exiting the station.

### DAY 3

Destination	Wellington
Meals included	
Hotel	4 ★ Distinction Wellington, or similar

Enjoy a free day at leisure to explore Wellington at your own pace.

## TOUR ITINERARY

### LORD OF THE RINGS FULL DAY TOUR

Starting on Mt Victoria with a visit to the lookout then onto locations used in the Trilogy like the Outer Shire, Hobbiton Woods & Dunharrow. Then out to the Hutt Valley to Kaitoke Regional park, the location of Rivendell. Along the way visiting Isengard, Fords of Isen, the River Anduin and past the quarry where Helms Deep & Minas Tirith were filmed. The Full day tour also includes an Orc sized picnic lunch or café lunch plus a visit to the famous Weta Cave and now including the Weta Workshop tour.

**Duration:** This tour starts at 08.30am and returns at 04.30pm

**Inclusions:** Hotel pick up and drop off and lunch.

### LORD OF THE RINGS HALF DAY TOUR - AM

The Half Day Lord of the Rings Location Tour (allow 4 hours) is a 'best of' tour, showcasing the best locations around Wellington City. Including the Outer-Shire 'Get off the road' scene and the race to the Ferry. Also includes a stop at the Mt Victoria Lookout. Plus now including the Weta Cave & Weta Workshop Tour. This is the best way to see Wellington's Lord of the Rings locations in half a day with a knowledgeable Lord of the Rings specialist guide.

**Duration:** This tour departs at 08.30am and returns at 12.30pm

**Inclusions:** Hotel pick up and drop off

### HALF DAY CITY HIGHLIGHTS INSPIRATION TOUR

An intimate, small group tour looking at the unique aspects of the World's Coolest Little Capital. Drive through Courtenay Place and Oriental Parade and head up Mt Victoria for spectacular views of the City and Harbour. Then travel the stunning, rugged coastline, now a marine reserve, stopping along the way to taste some famous Wellington coffee. Return to the central city for a drive through the quirky Cuba Street district and along Lambton Quay, the main shopping street, for a chance to ride the famous Wellington Cable Car. We finish the tour with stops at Parliament and Old St Paul's Cathedral.

**Duration:** This tour departs at 09.00am and returns at 1.30pm

**Inclusions:** Hotel pick up and drop off; entry fees and morning tea.

## DAY 4

Destination	Wellington  Picton  Christchurch
Meals included	
Hotel	4 ★ Bella Vista Christchurch, or similar

A big day of stunning landscapes is ahead of you today. This morning, make your way to the central wharf to board the Interislander ferry to Picton. Connecting the North Island and South Island together since 1962, the Interislander ferry service is New Zealand's original Cook Strait ferry. Sailing between Wellington and Picton several times a day, the

## TOUR ITINERARY

Interislander journey is considered one of the most beautiful ferry journeys in the world and one of New Zealand's most iconic experiences and connects seamlessly with the Coastal Pacific train which is the next leg of your journey.

On arrival in Picton the ferry and the train are separated by only metres. The location is well sign posted. The Coastal Pacific train takes you along rugged coastlines, across remote beaches, between mountains and sea, on a timeless journey of breathtaking beauty.

On arrival in Christchurch, disembark your scenic train and make your way to your hotel. We recommend a short taxi service which can be found easily when exiting the station.

**Itinerary note.** *Coastal Pacific schedule hasn't been released yet for the season commencing on 1st October 2021. Should Coastal Pacific train not run on this day, the trip between Picton and Christchurch will be travelled by bus instead.*

### DAY 5

Destination	Christchurch  Greymouth (Tranzalpine)  Franz Josef
Meals included	
Hotel	3 ★ Franz Josef Glacier Punga Grove, or similar

A private driver will collect you from your accommodation and transfer you to the Christchurch train station in time for your train journey. Your early morning departure is rewarded with incredible scenery today onboard the TranzAlpine Scenic Train, considered one of the world's great train journeys. It travels between Christchurch and Greymouth, from one coast of New Zealand to the other. From your carriage you'll see the fields of the Canterbury Plains and farmland, followed by the spectacular gorges and river valleys of the Waimakariri River. Your train then climbs into the Southern Alps before descending through the lush beech rainforest to the West Coast town of Greymouth - a great base for visits to Punakaiki and the West Coast glaciers.

On arrival, board a coach to Franz Josef Glacier which departs from the Greymouth Railway Station. The journey to the Glaciers is southward through the lush bush covered landscape at the base of the Southern Alps. A refreshment stop in Hokitika allows you to stretch your legs around the town centre. Further south you pass through the township of Ross which was the centre of one of New Zealand's richest alluvial goldfields in the late 1800s. Further along, travelling down the West Coast enjoy the beautiful landscape of vast rainforests, gushing waterfalls and snow-capped mountains before arriving into the small village of Franz Josef. From here you can explore the world famous Franz Josef Glacier. On arrival in Franz Josef, the coach will drop you off at the Main Rd stop, make your way 350m to the hotel for check-in.

### DAY 6

Destination	Franz Josef
Meals included	
Hotel	3 ★ Franz Josef Glacier Punga Grove, or similar

Enjoy a full day to explore Franz Josef. Franz Josef is a small but lively town in the heart of the West Coast, known for its 12 km long glacier. Surrounded by lush rainforest-clad mountains the township has a vibrant and bustling atmosphere. To see the ice from a viewpoint you can walk along the valley floor to the viewpoint below the terminal face.

## TOUR ITINERARY

### DAY 7

Destination	Franz Josef 🚗 Queenstown
Meals included	
Hotel	3 ★ Blue Peaks Lodge, or similar

Today, make your way back to the Main Rd stop at Franz Josef to board a coach from Franz Josef to Queenstown. Leave the small village of Franz Josef, access point to the world famous Franz Josef Glacier, and journey through the remote and rugged landscape of the West Coast. This is New Zealand at its purest and most untamed, see moody mountain ranges, thick native rainforest and wild rocky shores as you travel in comfort. Cross over to the East Coast through the Haast Pass, the southernmost pass in the Southern Alps. On the other side, enjoy picture-postcard views of vibrant blue lakes like Lake Hawea, Lake Wanaka and Lake Dunstan as you make your way into scenic Queenstown, arriving in the late afternoon.

On arrival, you will be dropped at the central stop. From here it is around 600m to your hotel.

### DAY 8

Destination	Queenstown
Meals included	
Hotel	3 ★ Blue Peaks Lodge, or similar

Enjoy a free day in stunning Queenstown. Although celebrated as New Zealand's 'adventure capital' Queenstown offers far more than a fast paced action-packed holiday. Settled on the shores of Lake Wakatipu beneath a soaring panorama of the Remarkables Mountain Range, this alpine town is surrounded by a plethora of historic, gastronomic and scenic wonders.

### DAY 9

Destination	Queenstown
Meals included	
Hotel	3 ★ Blue Peaks Lodge, or similar

Today, enjoy a full day tour to Milford Sound. Including return luxury coach transport from Queenstown to Milford Sound, with a 1 hour 40 minute Cruise along the full length of the fiord.

On boarding a Real Journeys luxury glass-roofed coach in Queenstown or Te Anau, you will enjoy a relaxing trip along the shores of Lake Wakatipu and through the rolling countryside to Te Anau. The coach driver provides an informative commentary. After a morning tea break in Te Anau, where you have the option of purchasing refreshments, the coach continues along the spectacular Milford Road. There is time for photo stops and short walks along the way. On reaching Milford Sound, you board the modern, spacious vessel for a leisurely cruise in the fiord. The cruise provides excellent viewing opportunities and plenty of time is available to enjoy waterfalls, rainforest, mountains and the wildlife. During the cruise your friendly crew provide commentaries in several languages and point out the sights such as Mitre Peak and the Pembroke Glacier.

### DAY 10

Destination	Queenstown
Meals included	
Accommodation	N/A

## **TOUR ITINERARY**

Today you will be collected from your hotel and transferred to the airport at the appropriate time.

## TOUR ITINERARY

### Inclusions

#### WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Travel on board the Tranz Alpine, Northern Explorer and Coastal Pacific trains (*\*see Day 4 itinerary note for train schedule*)
- Incredible sightseeing, travel on some of the world's most scenic rail journeys, venture into an untouched world of Milford Sound on a scenic cruise, enjoy free time to explore Franz Josef and New Zealand's adventure capital: Queenstown
- Cruise between Wellington and Picton on the Interslander scenic ferry
- 9 nights accommodation in 3 and 4 star hotels

#### TRAIN INFORMATION

##### **Northern Explorer, between Auckland and Wellington**

The train company will automatically reserve your seat(s). Your seat number(s) will be on your Boarding Pass, which we print the day before travel ready for your arrival.

All seats are the same. They are large, they are comfy, they are reclined - and they all have amazing views!

All seats have New Zealand 3-pin power sockets and a headphone socket for listening to the onboard commentary (headphones are supplied).

##### **Coastal Pacific Train, between Picton and Christchurch**

Scenic Class carriage experience combines comfort and panoramic views, making our trains the perfect way to explore New Zealand.

At the heart of our Scenic Class experience are spacious reclined seats, panoramic windows, glass shelves and skylights. These details bathe our carriages in light and bring New Zealand's famous landscapes to your seat.

Scenic Class carriages deliver extremely wide viewing angles by spacing the seating out. This spaciousness also creates generous amounts of legroom and comfort.

***Itinerary note.*** *Coastal Pacific schedule hasn't been released yet for the season commencing on 1st October 2021. Should Coastal Pacific train not run on this day, the trip between Picton and Christchurch will be travelled by bus instead.*



## TOUR ITINERARY

### **TranzAlpine, between Greymouth and Christchurch**

Scenic Class carriage experience combines comfort and panoramic views, making our trains the perfect way to explore New Zealand.

At the heart of our Scenic Class experience are spacious reclined seats, panoramic windows, glass shelves and skylights. These details bathe our carriages in light and bring New Zealand's famous landscapes to your seat.

Our Scenic Class carriages deliver extremely wide viewing angles by spacing the seating out. This spaciousness also creates generous amounts of legroom and comfort.

### **BOOK WITH CONFIDENCE**

Inspiring Vacations has been globally recognised and awarded for its handling of COVID-19 during the pandemic. The safety and wellbeing of our guests is our highest concern during this time of uncertainty, and we are continuously monitoring the evolving COVID-19 situation.

We have adopted the advice of the WHO to ensure all customers can travel with the knowledge of how to travel safely and with confidence.

### **Australian owned and operated with 100% Australian Customer Service support**

We are proudly 100% Australian owned and operated, with our head office located in Melbourne, Victoria. When you make your booking, you will receive dedicated and ongoing support from our team of travel professionals throughout your booking, up until you are due to depart.

### **Flexible Date Change Option**

Book now, change later with our Flexible Date Change option. You may select this \$99pp option at time of purchase, giving travellers the flexibility to change your date without penalty (subject to availability, less third party costs incurred, plus any applicable surcharges for the new date selected).

Date change must be requested prior to 65 days before your original selected departure date\*. Once inside 65 days of departure, date changes are not permitted.

\*some packages may have a varied period in which you can request a date change due to limitations with the third-party provider.

## TOUR ITINERARY

Please refer to our 'Book with Confidence' section for terms and conditions.

The Flexible Date Change option does not cover cost incurred for components not fulfilled by Inspiring Vacations or in the event extra services have been booked with Inspiring Vacations outside of the standard package, including but not limited to airfares, pre/post accommodation or insurance.

### **Cooling off period**

If you change your mind within 7 days of making your booking online, you can request a refund of your initial deposit payment as part of our cooling off period.

Once your purchase date falls outside of the 7 day period, our standard terms and conditions will apply. Please ensure that any request to cancel your booking is received via email to [support@inspiringvacations.com](mailto:support@inspiringvacations.com), including the reason for cancellation.

---

## Fine Print

## TOUR ITINERARY

### HOW TO BOOK & PAYMENTS

#### Deposit & Payments

- Book now and secure your package with a \$250 deposit per person.
- Pay a 2nd instalment of \$892 per person within 28 days.
- You will then be invoiced for final payment 90 days prior to departure.

#### Booking Process

- 'Sign Up' first by entering your email and creating a password
- Then select the red 'Book now' tab of the tour you have selected
- Select your Departure Date, Number of Passengers, Room Configuration, any Upgrade Options, and enter any Special Requests
- Click the red 'Proceed to Secure Checkout' tab
- Enter your credit card or PayPal details to secure your deposit/payment.
- Once your order is complete, you will be prompted to complete a Booking Form so that we can fulfil your booking
- Once your order is complete, you will be prompted to complete a Booking Form so that we can fulfil your booking
- Your booking is on request and will be confirmed by Inspiring Vacations once all components of your package have been secured with our partners, please see below for further information

#### Booking On Request

- Your Inspiring Vacations package is made up of multiple components and travel partners. Once your booking is made and passenger details form submitted, we will begin to confirm all of your arrangements. Please note, this process can take several business days to complete.
- Once all elements have been confirmed we will send you an email confirmation, if we are unable to confirm we will provide you with alternative dates or offer a full refund of your deposit or re-credit your account if a travel credit was used.
- Please DO NOT book any additional services, such as flights, until we have confirmed your Inspiring Vacations package in writing. Inspiring Vacations will not be liable for any fees or charges incurred to change or cancel components not booked by Inspiring Vacations should your selected package be unavailable.

## TOUR ITINERARY

### OPTIONAL TOURS

To enhance your journey, we are offering guests a choice of the following optional activities (prices are per person):

- Auckland (Day 1): Auckland City Sights Morning Tour and Sky Tower - \$100
- Auckland (Day 1): Hobbiton and Waitomo Tour - \$362
- Auckland (Day 1): Waitomo & Rotorua Day Tour - \$357
- Wellington (Day 3): Half Day City Highlights Inspiration Tour - \$175
- Wellington (Day 3): Lord of the Rings Half Day Tour - AM - \$110
- Wellington (Day 3): Full Day Lord of the Rings Tour - \$225

Optional tours can be selected once you have finalised your tour purchase and paid your deposit. When completing your Passenger Booking Form, you will be asked if you would like to add Optional Tours, where any applicable cost will be added to your final balance. If you choose not to select them at this time, you can choose to add them later by logging in to your Account online or speaking with your Dedicated Support Agent for assistance.

Please note that you must select your Optional Tours no later than 65 days before departure, after which you will be required to purchase them on tour. Please keep in mind that anything purchased on-tour is subject to availability. We appreciate your understanding.

### EXCLUSIONS

- No meals, unless stated in the itinerary
- International Flights
- Anything not mentioned in the itinerary
- Personal expenses
- Optional activities
- Travel insurance (highly recommended)

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

#### **Fitness Requirements**

While the tour itinerary should give you some guidance and overview to the expected requirements, to determine if this tour is right for you we categorise each of our tours in terms of their intensity. These guidelines are to ensure that each tour group is conducted as expected and to ensure the overall satisfaction of all Inspiring Vacations customers.

As a general rule, portage is not included, therefore at all times you are expected to handle your own luggage where help may not be available.

## TOUR ITINERARY

This particular tour is categorised as a "3".

3 – Moderate Tour: A good level of fitness and mobility is required, as this tour includes a moderate level of physical activity and is considered a medium-fast paced tour. You should be able to walk up and down stairs and able to walk reasonable distances of approximately 2 kilometres per day or more with ease. Any physical ailments you may have must be disclosed at the time of booking to determine your suitability. If you have any form of walking aids, other than a walking stick or hiking poles, then this tour is not suitable.

### **Accommodation**

The accommodation listed is subject to change. Any changes will be of an equal or higher standard. Bedding configurations (double or twin) are requests only. All efforts will be made to meet your preferences, however any changes are beyond our control.

### **Single Supplement**

Single supplement is \$1,418 per person in addition to the twin-share price.

### **Triple Share**

Not available.

### **Travel Insurance**

Travel insurance is required to protect yourself against the unexpected.

### **Tour Documentation**

Final documentation including, e-tickets and hotel details, will be provided approximately 30 days prior to travel.

### **Group Size**

This is an independent itinerary. On these packages you will travel from city to city on your own, exploring at your own pace. We have arranged transportation in most cases and day tours for you to see the destination.

### **Children**

Children must be 5 years old or above and share a room with parents at all times. Children are charged the same price as adults.

## TOUR ITINERARY

---