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15 days  
 Duration

Level 2 - Moderate  
 Activity

# Small group tour of New Zealand exploring Maori and Wairua

Feb 06 2023 to Feb 20 2023

## Small Group tour of New Zealand; exploring Maori and Wairua

Welcome to the Land of the Long White Cloud, Aoteroa or New Zealand. We begin this escorted small group tour for mature and senior travellers in Auckland



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<https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au>

27-Jan-2023

Michelle Cotton is Odyssey's program leader for this 15 day journey through New Zealand. This program takes in some stunning landscapes and amazing places but is not a regular tour of tourist stop after tourist stop. Whilst Odyssey Traveller small group tours of New Zealand and all around the world have a significant historical, cultural and environmental learning base this program is more about the role of spirituality, your personal journey which is why Michelle is leading this tour.

On this program we start in Auckland and finish the tour in Queenstown. Visiting and exploring Tongariro, Kaikoura and Castle hill, places of significant importance to the Maori. You have the opportunity to stay on the Marae and enjoy the unique Dawn celebration at Auckland's Bastion point.

The days itineraries have been thought out to bring about time to consider change, time for reflection, time to take you out of your comfort zone to create a place where you can explore yourself. This is why the days are planned to create the opportunity for your to personally explore. There are other small group touring programs offered by Odyssey that will share the history of the place, this program is about you and a chance to travel the length of New Zealand and explore who you are and shift your perspective and consider what level of wellness is relevant for you. Your program leader will be encouraging you to meditate and explore your world with Michelle on at least one private and personal session during the tour program.

## Spiritual Concepts of the Maori

The Maori conception of the spiritual nature of man is a matter of considerable interest. The Maori has ever recognized an immortal element in man, which styles the wairua. Indeed, Maori may be said to have held the theory of the tripartite nature of man—body, soul, and spirit being his tinana, mauri, and wairua.

Wairua also means "shadow." The wairua of a person is that which leaves his body at death, never to return. It also leaves his body for

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brief periods during his life—that is, when he dreams—and is a more active force than the mauri. Spirits of the dead that do not immediately proceed to the spirit-world but lurk round the village home in the form of ghosts are termed kehua. The mauri of a person differs from his wairua, for it cannot leave the body during life. It is his life-principle, or vital spark, and so is sometimes referred to as mauri ora, or living mauri.

This small group tour will be accompanied by an Odyssey tour guide and are joined by expert local guides who will impart their knowledge about the places we will visit. Odyssey conducts educational tours designed for small groups of mature and senior travellers, focusing on history, culture, wildlife and other areas of particular interest where the trip is taking place. A small group tour is typically between 6 to 15 people. The cost of an Odyssey Traveller guided tour is inclusive of all entrances (unless otherwise indicated), tipping, and majority of the meals throughout the trip.

This particular tour has periods of free time built into the itinerary, allowing you explore some destinations at your own pace, and choose from a variety of available activities. This way, we make sure that there is something to enjoy for every kind of traveller.

This Maori philosophy towards health is based on a wellness or holistic health model. With its strong foundations and four equal sides, the symbol of the whareniui illustrates the four dimensions of Māori well-being. Should one of the four dimensions be missing or in some way damaged, a person, or a collective may become 'unbalanced' and subsequently unwell. For many Māori modern health services lack recognition of taha wairua (the spiritual dimension). In a traditional Māori approach, the inclusion of the wairua, the role of the whānau (family) and the balance of the hinengaro (mind) are as important as the

physical manifestations of illness.

Seeing health as a four-sided concept representing four basic beliefs of life, summarised in the model below:

Te Taha Hinengaro (psychological health),

Te Taha Wairua (spiritual health),

Te Taha Tinana (physical health),

Te Taha Whanau (family health).

During this small group tour of New Zealand these four elements of wellness are discussed and considered by the group and on a personal level in the places visited and the discussions had during the touring program.

## Accommodation

New Zealand is well known for its network of boutique lodges and small charming hotels as well as traditional hotel style accommodation types. For this program we have selected accommodation that represents good value, is close to where we need to be, has some but not many amenities that the group need and has a good reputation for looking after travellers who are visiting and finally has rooms with terrific beds to sleep in after a day in the open air. We trust you enjoy the choices we have made that are above our usual choice of hotel to stay in.

## Articles about the New Zealand published by Odyssey Traveller:

- [Questions about New Zealand](#)
- [Foundations for democracy in New Zealand: 900s – 1945](#)

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- [Preparing for a walking holiday](#)

For all the articles Odyssey Traveller has published for mature aged and senior travellers, click through [on this link](#).

## External articles to assist you on your visit to New Zealand:

- [Walking and hiking New Zealand](#)
- [Great walks of New Zealand](#)
- [Walking New Zealand \(magazine\)](#)
- [History of New Zealand](#)
- [Visit New Zealand](#)
- [One day in Wellington: City walking tour itinerary](#)

## Highlights

1. Visit Bastion Point as the dawn breaks for a Karakia
2. Explore temperate rain forest in Waitakere including the Kauri tree habitat and the west coast beach of Karekare
3. See and learn about the Uenuku, one of the oldest Maori carvings in New Zealand
4. Explore Queen Charlotte sound on a 75-year old Kauri classic launch called "Tutanekai"
5. Spend days on the South Island, West Coast, Ponamu country with senior members of local Maori

## Itinerary

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## Day 1

**Locations:** Auckland

### Overview:

Haere mai ki Aotearoa – welcome to the Land of the Long White Cloud.

Upon arrival at Auckland International Airport you will meet your guide and transfer to your inner city hotel. New Zealand's largest and most multicultural city. Auckland is an urban environment where everyone lives within half an hour of beautiful beaches, hiking trails and a dozen of islands. Auckland's vast harbour, quiet islands and vibrant cityscape offer an exciting and accessible mix of urban, water and wildlife activities.

Welcome dinner is included tonight.

We stay 3 nights at the Heritage Auckland Hotel, set within one of the city's most recognisable historic landmark buildings, the iconic Farmers department store building.

### Accommodation:

Heritage Hotel or similar

## Day 2

**Locations:** Auckland

### Overview:

Today we have a tour of the Maori collection at the Auckland war memorial museum with a local guide. This afternoon we have a guided tour around Auckland to explore the city further. There will be free time in the afternoon for a gallery visit or opportunity to walk around the city.

### Accommodation:

Heritage Hotel or similar

## Day 3

**Locations:** Auckland

### Overview:

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Early rise today and depart the hotel before breakfast. We meet with Dane Tumahai, Ngati Whatua kaumatua at the Orakei Marae. We will walk towards Bastion Point as the dawn breaks for a Karakia (prayer used to invoke spiritual guidance and protection). After the blessing Dane will share with us the history of his peoples and the significance of the area to his Iwi. We will then drive to Te Pane o Horoiwi/Achilles Point – a cultural site of significance to view the 3 carved pou before going to breakfast at a local cafe. After we have been nourished you will ascend Mt Eden for a final Karakia to send us safely on your travels through New Zealand.

Later in the day we will head out to the West Coast of Auckland to Karekare Beach. Karekare Beach on the West Coast is known for its natural beauty and isolation. Auckland's West Coast is very different from the East. Dense rainforest, crashing surf, black sand, often wild weather combine to make this a very soulful, brooding, beautiful place. This is where The Piano was filmed and there are some very good bush and beach walks in the area, as well as an easily accessible waterfall.

**Accommodation:**

Heritage Hotel or similar

**Day 4**

**Locations:** Auckland - Taupo

**Overview:**

After breakfast we depart Auckland and travel South towards the beating heart of the North Island (Taupo).

We make a stop along the way at Te Awamutu Museum to view Uenuku, an important Tainui artefact. Uenuku is one of the oldest Maori carvings in New Zealand. This carving was made using only stone tools and depicts one of the traditional Maori gods or spirits, he is said to manifest as a rainbow. Uenuku has 4 spikes at the top & 3 gaps in between which are believed to represent the 7 colours of the rainbow. The spirit of Uenuku was said to be brought to New Zealand on the Tainui canoe & this carving, made from New Zealand totara, was made here to contain this spirit. The spirit, brought here in a stone, was said to have sat in top circular part of Uenuku.

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The Great Lake Taupo region is 'Nature's Ultimate Playground', centrally located in the middle of the North Island, it's an adventure and sporting mecca and a nature-lover's paradise. The region is one of New Zealand's top tourist destinations with beautiful forests, volcanic mountains and the stunning Lake Taupo. In the afternoon we experience a guided meditation at the Sanctuary at Tauhara Retreat. We stay two nights at the Tauhara Retreat, located in Acacia Bay, overlooking Lake Taupo in the centre of New Zealand's North Island. It is a place of great wairua (spiritual energy).

Our dinner this evening is at our accommodation.

**Accommodation:**

Tauhara Retreat

**Day 5****Locations:** Taupo**Overview:**

We enjoy breakfast at the retreat before heading to Mt Titiraupenga where local iwi will welcome us to their sacred land. Mount Titiraupenga, long known by Maori to be the centre of the North Island, is home to a sacred area of mature native bush, 600 year old Totara trees.

This mystical and totally private setting is where we like to arrange a formal welcome, powhiri, followed by a 'sharing session'.

The main warrior is the master carver for the local Ngati Tuwharetoa tribe – Delani Brown. A gentle, humble, and spiritual man. In Maori tribes the carver is second only to the chief, as the carver is the guardian of the stories and traditions, which he keeps alive in his work.

This is a special event for the group to experience. The remainder of the day is free to explore Taupo at your own pace.

**Accommodation:**

Tauhara Retreat



## Day 6

**Locations:** Wellington

### Overview:

Today we travel south through the Tongariro National Park dominated by the 3 mountains of Ruapehu, Tongariro and Ngauruhoe. Remote and desolate country providing us with a stunning landscape. The desert slowly changes into rural farmland before we reach “the coolest little Capital” Wellington.

Along the way we will pause at a site of special spiritual significance. Wellington’s a city famous for a vibrant creative culture fueled by great food, wine, craft beer, coffee and events. Wellington is a cosmopolitan city with an energetic personality.

We spend one night in the heart of the Lambton Quarter.

### Accommodation:

Wellesley Hotel or similar

## Day 7

**Locations:** Picton

### Overview:

We take the inter island ferry this morning to Picton. Upon arrival into Picton we will make our way to the marina to meet our hosts for the next two days.

This is an exhilarating two days as a group as we explore beautiful Queen Charlotte Sound with Pete and Takutai, a Maori family, operating personalised Eco-Tours on a 75-year old Kauri classic launch called "Tutanekai". They will share with us stories of the area and also do some shell fish gathering to eat on board. We will have a picnic lunch in stunningly beautiful Ship Cove surrounded by virgin bush, Captain Cook's favourite anchorage in the South Pacific.

In the afternoon we take a guided walk with Takutai who has an affinity with the native birds that live in the bush and is very spiritually in tune.

We will then will be dropped at Furneaux Lodge for our overnight stay in the Marlborough Sounds.

Nestled in the outer reaches of the Queen Charlotte Sound, in the heart of New Zealand's stunning Marlborough Sounds, Furneaux Lodge is the first stop on the renowned Queen Charlotte Track. Looking out over the calm, clear waters of Endeavour Inlet, the Lodge is surrounded by 2000 acres of native virgin forest which has been unchanged since Captain Cook's first visit to the inlet in 1769. Built in the early 1900's at the foot of it's namesake Mount Furneaux, Furneaux Lodge is set on 3 acres of the flattest and most picturesque scenery in the Marlborough Sounds. Part of the beauty of this historic destination is the isolation – no roads lead to Furneaux Lodge.

**Accommodation:**

Furneaux Lodge

**Day 8****Locations:** Kaikoura**Overview:**

Today we get back onto the launch Tutanekai and cruise through Endeavour inlet – we will spend time visiting the two thousand year old giant Podocarps and the WWII gun-emplacements on Blumine Island before heading back to shore.

After lunch at a local cafe you will start the journey south along the coast to Kaikoura.

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Kaikoura's environment is truly spectacular – the village is caught between the rugged Seaward Kaikoura Range and the Pacific Ocean. In winter the mountains are covered with snow, adding to the drama of the landscape. Kaikoura's special talent is marine mammal encounters – whales, fur seals and dolphins live permanently in the coastal waters. On arrival in Kaikoura this small group tour joins a scheduled whale watching cruise. Today's group whale watch safari is a great adventure to learn about the incredibly rich marine life of this area.

Kaikoura is one of the few places in the world where sperm whales can be seen year-round and close to shore. They congregate here because the 3km deep Kaikoura Canyon runs right up against the coast creating a rare system of sea currents that sustain an incredibly rich marine food chain. Spot one of the young sperm whales before it dives under the surface again, reaching depths of up to 1000 meters.

We stay one night at The White Morph, enjoying commanding views of the ocean right to the distant horizon and mountains.

**Accommodation:**

The White Morph

**Day 9****Locations:** Castle Hill**Overview:**

After breakfast at the hotel we start our journey South to Castle Hill (called the spiritual centre of the universe by the Dalai Lama).

The grand limestone rock battlements of Kura Tawhiti led early European travellers to name this unique area Castle Hill, the area is rich in Maori history. The track loops its way around the magnificent limestone rock formations but the joy in this area is heading off the track and exploring at your own pace.

**Accommodation:**

Porters Lodge or similar

**Day 10****Locations:** Hokitika via Arthur's Pass**Overview:**

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After a dawn ceremony at Castle Hill we head back to the Lodge for breakfast before taking to the road for a journey over the Arthur's Pass. Arthur's Pass National Park is in the heart of the Southern Alps/Kaitiaki Tiritiri o te Moana. Its high mountains with large scree slopes, steep gorges and wide braided rivers straddle the main divide, and are the 'back bone' of the South Island.

On arrival on the West Coast we will meet Bevan Climo, the son of the Paramount Chief in the Hokitika area. This is the centre of pounamu (greenstone) in New Zealand. Bevan is acknowledged as one of the foremost carvers in New Zealand. He is a local character, knows many of the local characters, fronts an excellent bluegrass band, and will provide us with a unique introduction to life on the West Coast. This frontier area, home to a frontier mentality is notoriously difficult to get to, unless your guide is someone like Bevan.

We stay one night in central Hokitika on the shores of the Tasman sea, with easy access to the beach and local artisan galleries.

**Accommodation:**

Beachfront Hotel or similar

**Day 11****Locations:** Bruce Bay**Overview:**

Breakfast is included at the Beachfront hotel in Hokitika.

We start our journey down the West Coast after breakfast. The West Coast, or 'the Coast' as locals call it, is an untamed natural wilderness of rivers and rainforests, glaciers and geological treasures. Along the way we will pass by and pause to see the Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers. We continue to Bruce Bay, a small coastal settlement with stunning sea vistas and a wonderfully wild windswept beach.

Dinner is included at the Marae.

Bruce Bay was where Maui first landed in New Zealand from Hawaii and the marae bears his name in commemoration of this feat. He then traversed the South Island before fishing up the North Island. There are only about a dozen permanent residences at Bruce Bay as well as a sprinkling of holiday homes and baches and the area is known for its abundant bird life, fantastic fishing, and the magnificence of the sunsets. We stay one night

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**Accommodation:**

Te Tauraka Waka, a Maui Marae

**Day 12**

**Locations:** Central Otago (Lauder)

**Overview:**

After breakfast we drive from the West Coast to Makaroa passes, through the spectacular Haast Pass. This route was a traditional pathway for Maori journeying west in search of pounamu (greenstone or jade). A number of shorter walks begin at the highway's edge between Haast and Makarora, some of the favourites include walks to the Blue Pools, Fantail Falls, Thunder Creek Falls and Roaring Billy. We take a break in Makarora for a Jetboating experience.

Jetboats were invented in New Zealand as a clever way of navigating the very shallow water we get on our South Island braided rivers. It is smooth, fast and very manoeuvrable. The boat takes us down the Makarora and up the Wilkin, showcasing some of the best jetboating terrain in the country – gravel banks, fast flowing rivers against a backdrop of Southern Alps, gin-clear water.

From Makarora we drive to Lauderdale Estate where we will come together for a spiritual session in the Redwoods. Lauderdale Estate is situated in beautiful Central Otago – a region where we will find a stunning landscape of rugged mountains, lakes, rivers and rolling farmland. The property is the original farmstead block for Lauder Station, which at one stage had more than 60,000 acres running sheep, but was carved off and now comprises 60 acres and 1.5km of river frontage.

We spend one night at Lauder School B&B in the charming village of Lauder, deep in the heart of Central Otago. With its spacious Common Room, lovely country gardens and outdoor spa, Lauder School B&B offers a wide variety of places for guests to come together and socialise.

**Accommodation:**

Lauder School Bed & Breakfast

## Day 13

**Locations:** Queenstown

### Overview:

We enjoy breakfast at our accommodation before departing Lauder and starting our journey to Queenstown. We will stop along the way at some of the small Central Otago Towns which were built around the Goldrush of the the 1800s.

Affectionately called 'Central' by those that know it well, Central Otago is New Zealand's most inland region, located in the southern half of the South Island. Discover Central Otago, a region where you will find a stunning countryside, lakes, rivers and rolling farmland, vivid seasons and rocky, mountainous landscapes; friendly townships; a well-preserved gold heritage; award-winning wineries, recreational opportunities from fishing, mountain biking and the Central Otago Rail Trail to winter sports like curling and ice skating; and so much more. Queenstown sits on the shore of crystal clear Lake Wakatipu among dramatic alpine ranges, it is known as the "adventure capital of the world". From sky-diving to fine dining, this resort town offers something for everyone.

We stay 2 nights in a centrally located hotel in Queenstown, with easy access to the heart of the city and all that premier four season lake and alpine resort has to offer.

### Accommodation:

Novotel Queenstown or similar

## Day 14

**Locations:** Queenstown

### Overview:

We explore the region as a group with a day trip to Wanaka then Arrowtown before returning to Queenstown in the afternoon.

A group farewell dinner is included tonight.

### Accommodation:

Novotel Queenstown or similar

## Day 15

**Locations:** Queenstown

### Overview:

Tour concludes after breakfast today.

## Inclusions / Exclusions

### What's included in our Tour

- 14 nights accommodation.
- 14 breakfasts, 10 dinners.
- Transport by modern and comfortable coach.
- Entrances and sightseeing as specified.
- Services of a Tour Leader for the duration of tour
- Detailed Preparatory Information

### What's not included in our Tour

- Return international airfare and departure taxes.
- Comprehensive travel insurance.
- Items of a personal nature, such as telephone calls and laundry

### Level 2 - Moderate

Participants must be able to carry their own luggage, climb and descend stairs, be in good health, mobile and able to participate in 3-5 hours of physical activity per day, the equivalent of walking/hiking up to 8 kilometres on uneven ground.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any requests for further information about this tour or any others offered by Odyssey Travel.