



From
\$6,716 USD

Single Room

\$7,783 USD

Twin Room

\$6,716 USD

Prices valid until
 30th December 2022

13 days

Duration

Level 1 - Introductory to Moderate

Activity

Small group tour of New Zealand's North Island

Oct 10 2022 to Oct 22 2022

Small Group Tour of New Zealand's North island

Odyssey offers easy, convenient, and relaxed escorted small group tours across New Zealand. We explore the North island of New Zealand's fairy-tale natural beauty, and its World Heritage Sites, and world famous cities, all with some truly spectacular scenery along the way. This and more is all waiting to be explored on one of Odyssey's small group tours of New Zealand designed for the senior traveller, and led by experienced, and enthusiastic like minded people



Small group tour of New Zealand's North Island

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

13-Aug-2022

Odyssey Traveller is pleased to introduce our new small group tour of New Zealand, focusing on the beautiful North Island. Our tour is for up to 15 people, typically mature and senior travellers joining as a couple or as solo traveller. This program will guide travellers through the history, Maori culture, and landscapes of the North Island of New Zealand. Our itinerary gets off the beaten track, following the east coast of the North Island from Auckland to Wellington.

For many visitors, the South Island gets all the attention, with the big tourist draws of Franz Josef Glacier, Milford Sound, Queenstown and historic Christchurch. But dig deeper and you'll find that New Zealand's North Island has as much to offer, including the beautiful Bay of Islands, Poor Knights Island, White Island, and Waiheke Island, the bird sanctuary of Tiritiri Matangi, the Art Deco of Hawke's Bay, alpine Tongariro, and the glow worm caves in the Waitomo Caves complex.

The arrival of Europeans – mostly British settlers – in New Zealand set in motion a startling and ultimately largely successful co-existence with the Maori people, that will be the focus of this tour of New Zealand.

Both Maori traditional owners and new settlers had to come to terms with the fiercely disparate environments and climates found through New Zealand, from the subtropical north to the alpine south. This is the route we will follow on this tour, heading from Auckland on a journey through the Coromandel Peninsula, then tracking south through the Bay of Plenty to Tairāwhitu (The East Cape), rich in Maori culture and travel experiences. From Gisborne through Hawkes Bay and the Wairarapa, grape vines dominate the landscape. We will enjoy several wine tasting experiences, focusing on the different regions of grape that we travel through. The area is also home to several beautiful national park(s). Finally, our North Island road trip arrives in Wellington, New Zealand's capital city.

On our small group tour of New Zealand:

New Zealand (Maori: *Aotearoa*) is an island country with a total land area of 268,000 square kilometres (103,500 sq mi) in the southwestern

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Pacific Ocean. It is one of the most southernmost countries in the world, about 2,000 kilometres (1,200 mi) east of Australia. The country has two main islands: the North Island (Te Ika-a-M?ui) and the South Island (Te Waipounamu), and about 600 smaller islands.

Our 13-day small group tour of New Zealand's North Island is the best guided tour of the island's east coast, designed especially for mature and senior travellers. In Auckland, you join your tour guide and after a welcome dinner, the adventure begins the following morning with a trip on the fast ferry, past the island of Waiheke, to the town of Coromandel. From here, we are collected in our coach and our guided tour begins.

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 12 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 each destination 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.

Articles about New Zealand published by Odyssey Traveller:

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

- [Questions about New Zealand](#)
- [Foundations for democracy in New Zealand: 900s – 1945](#)
- [Definitive Guide to Auckland, New Zealand](#)

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:

- [Visit New Zealand](#)
- [One day in Wellington: City walking tour itinerary](#)
- [Te Ara: Auckland](#)
- [New York Times: 36 Hours in Auckland](#)

Highlights

1. Enjoy a scenic drive through the Coromandel Peninsula over two days .
2. Reach the east cape (Tairāwhitu), to learn about Maori as you journey through the Hawkes Bay.
3. Spend time immersed in the Art deco city of Napier.
4. Learn about leading New Zealand wines of Chardonnay in Gisborne & Pinot Noir in Martinborough during your visit.
5. Visit and learn about the worlds largest colony of Gannets on the the coast.

Itinerary

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Day 1

Locations: Auckland

Overview:

We meet in Auckland, introducing ourselves and enjoying a welcome guide with our tour leader.

Accommodation:

Auckland TBA

Day 2

Locations: Auckland - Coromandel- Whitianga

Overview:

Today we head to the Auckland ferry terminal to take the 2 hour journey across the Hauraki gulf to the small township of Coromandel on the Coromandel Peninsula. We meet the coach here which we take us on the rest of for the remainder of our journey through the National park pausing to explore and for photo stops, before taking the short trip across the Coromandel peninsula to seaside town of Whitianga where we are based this evening.

Group meal

Accommodation:

Whitianga. TBC

Day 3

Locations: Whitianga - Tauranga

Overview:

Today the group follows down the east coast of the North Island from the rugged bush clad hills of the Coromandel ranges till we reach the small holiday township of Tairua and dairy farms begin to appear as part of the landscape. We pause in the town of Waihi. Waihi is the home of the richest gold mine in New Zealand – still in operation today. We spend time in the Waihi Gold Discovery Centre to understand the history of the beginning of this regions history with gold that began in

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1838.

From Waihi we continue our journey on to the city of Tauranga where we end the trip for the day.

Accommodation:

Tauranga TBC

Day 4

Locations: Tauranga - Hicks bay

Overview:

Today this small group tour of New Zealand continue its journey along the east coast of the North Island, past traditional summer holiday destinations such as Whakatane and Opotiki. For the next few days Maori culture and a local tour guidewill provide the travel experiences, of each day tour, as well as the itinerary and our journey around this remote part of the North Island. The scenery is the bush covered hills of the National park and the Sea.

After Opotiki the road hugs the coast, we are off the beaten track now for most guided tour operators and we are about to join a part of New Zealand where Tangata Whenau , the stewardship of the land and local Maori communities protect the history and traditions as we reach Tairawhiti (East cape) the coast on one side and the National park dominates on the other side of the raod. Tairawhiti is the place where Maori believe that the first Polynesian canoes landed. Tairawhiti is the most Eastern part of of the North Island and of New Zealand. Mt Hikuraingi is, the place in New Zealand to see the sunrise first each day. James Cook made his first landfall here and it is where Maori and European first encountered each other. It is also where Mt Hikurangi is, the place in New Zealand where you can see the sun first each day. We end today's journey at Hicks bay.

Group meal tonight

Day 5

Locations: Hick's bay - Gisborne

Overview:

Today our day trip takes us to the tiny coastal settlement of Te Araroa to give a series of travel experiences that maybe very moving today. It is here you will find Te Waha-o-Rerekohu, New Zealand's oldest and largest pohutukawa tree. It's around 600 years old, and stands proudly in the grounds of the local school.

Te Araroa is also the birthplace of Sir Apirana Ngata, who made it his life's goal to uplift the Maori race spiritually, culturally and economically.

After Te Araroa we then continue further off the beaten track on a 22km, mostly unsealed, no-exit road that takes this small group to the most Easterly point on mainland New Zealand. The historic East Cape lighthouse stands 154 metres above sea level and is accessed by a walking track of some 700 steps – worth it for the views at the top.

The road to the lighthouse clings to the coastline, and there are numerous sandy beaches just metres away.

We head back out to the highway and carry on south to stop again at Saint Mary's Church in Tikitiki. This is one of the finest Māori churches in New Zealand. It was built in 1924 and consecrated in 1926 as a memorial to the soldiers of Ngāti Porou who died in World War I. For Maori culture this is a significant site and requires a lot of respect from any visitor. A visit to this part of New Zealand is very different to the commercial travel experiences of Rotorua.

The decoration of the church displays a meeting of two cultures. The structure is typically European, but the extensively carved and decorated interior is typically Māori.

Sir Apirana Ngata was the mastermind behind the spectacular interior design. In the 1920s he began a personal crusade to revive the dying art and craft skills within Ngati Porou and Māoridom in general. Saint Mary's was one of his first initiatives.

The church was carved by local Ngāti Porou carvers; Ngāti Porou weavers completed the tukutuku (woven panels). The ornate pulpit was a koha (gift) to the church by Te Arawa tribe. The memorial board in the church lists names of soldiers from the area who lost their lives in the

world wars. On the east wall is a memorial to Sir Apirana Ngata. From St Mary's church we travel on down the coast to Gisborne, gateway to Hawke's bay where we stay for 2 nights.

Group meal

Accommodation:

Gisborne TBA

Day 6

Locations: Gisborne

Overview:

In Gisborne we meet with our local guide to share with us a visit Kaiti Beach. This is the site of Captain Cook's first landing in New Zealand (9 October 1769) and nearby is picturesque Te Poho O Rawiri Marae.

If you're interested in Māori culture, Gisborne is an essential port of call on your itinerary – old traditions are still evident in many parts of the city. Oral history records Titirangi (Kaiti) Hill as the point of arrival for the migratory waka (canoe), Horouta, which brought the first Māori to the area.

There is the option of the Te Urunga -Tu – Sunrise experience on the highest peak above Gisborne. Arriving at "Te Takapau-o-Maui". A sacred site with nine Maori carvings that depict the stories of Maui, the Polynesian adventurer, famous for his legendary deeds. Visitors will learn about Maui and his stories, be part of a profound sunrise experience, witness spectacular views as the sun rises, and gain insight into the local region.

In the afternoon we visit two of the leading wineries who produce Chardonnay for which this part of New Zealand is famous for.

Accommodation:

Gisborne TBA

Day 7

Locations: Napier

Overview:

Today as stated in the itinerary we journey South again, this time onto the world's great Art-deco city of Napier. We pause at least twice on our journey to Napier. Your tour guide will explain about the first stop, a detour to New Zealand equivalent of NASA's Cape Canaveral though on a smaller scale. Kiwi ingenuity is often all around you in New Zealand. The decision/opportunity to launch satellites from Nuhaka just after the Mahia peninsula, is one of the more interesting concepts. Moving towards 100 launches we will stop to view, if something is scheduled to launch at [Rocketlab](#).

We take a break from the day trip in Wairoa. Travellers can explore the local museum, it is under the "RED awning"... perhaps have an early lunch or pick up lunch for when we break somewhere nice on the road. We travel on towards Napier arriving in the afternoon.

Group meal.

Accommodation:

Napier TBA

Day 8

Locations: Napier

Overview:

Napier is unique and is regarded as one of the world's great art deco cities. Street after street of stunning and beautifully-restored Art Deco buildings have made Napier famous as one of the most complete collections of Art Deco buildings in the world. In 1931 a massive earthquake rocked [Hawke's Bay](#) for more than three minutes, killing nearly 260 and destroying the commercial centre of Napier.

Rebuilding began almost immediately, and new buildings reflected the architectural styles of the times – Stripped Classical, Spanish Mission and Art Deco. Napier is often referred to as a 1930s film set, and one of the best ways to enjoy the streetscape is on a guided walk which we

undertake with a local tour guide as part of a private day tour.

In the afternoon we will head out to world's largest Gannet colony in the national park, before a wine tasting late in the afternoon. Wineries and vineyards are dotted throughout the Hawke's bay, although Gimblett Gravels and Ngatarawa Triangle are two of its most famous wine producing sub-regions. These regions produce a large portion of the Bordeaux blend reds that Hawke's bay is revered for. Owing to its geographical diversity, Hawke's bay is also capable of producing a number of other varietals to a high standard, including Chardonnay and today we will undertake a tasting at one the recognised wineries.

Accommodation:

Napier TBA.

Day 9

Locations: Napier- Martinborough

Overview:

This small group tour of New Zealand will travel on from Napier through the Wairapa region of the North Island to Martinborough arriving early afternoon. We have organised a guided walking tour with a local tour guide of Martinborough and a wine tasting before a group meal.

Accommodation:

Martinborough TBC

Day 10

Locations: Martinborough

Overview:

Today we travel to Masterton to visit the town, and our day tour includes the Aratoi Wairarapa Museum of Art and History. The museum marked its 50th anniversary in 2019 with a major exhibition, public programmes, and a publication available for purchase. Currently, Aratoi hosts between 25-30 exhibitions annually, delivers a free education programme to thousands of students, runs public programmes and a

live performance series, and operates a museum shop.

The Aratoi collection remains the only public collection of art works in Wairarapa.

In the afternoon we visit two of Martinborough's some 20 wineries to be found locally. Some of New Zealand's best pinot noir comes from the town's predominately family-owned vineyards.

Accommodation:

Martinborough TBA

Day 11

Locations: Wellington

Overview:

Today we travel to New Zealand's capital city, Wellington. After a lunch time arrival, a hotel check in the group has an afternoon at their leisure.

Accommodation:

Wellington TBA

Day 12

Locations: Wellington

Overview:

Wellington has been the nation's capital since 1856. We will enjoy a guided tour in this beautiful city on foot with a local guide. We take the Wellington Cable Car, New Zealand's only running funicular railway. This ride will take you from the heart of the city to a lookout that will give you a view of Wellington. You can walk through the Botanic Garden, and visit the historic Pioneer Cemetery established in the 19th century.

The tour of Wellington finishes in the Waterfront precinct close to the National Museum of New Zealand "Te papa". We have tickets for entry

into the Museum, the remainder of the afternoon is at your leisure.

Group Farewell Dinner

Accommodation:

Wellington TBA

Day 13

Locations: Wellington

Overview:

This small group tour of New Zealand journey down the East coast of the north Island concludes after breakfast.

Inclusions / Exclusions

What's included in our Tour

- 12 nights accommodation.
- 13 breakfasts, 7 dinners.
- Transport by modern and comfortable coach.
- Entrances and sightseeing as specified.
- Services of Tour Leader for the duration of tour.
- Detailed Preparatory Information.

What's not included in our Tour

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

Level 1 - Introductory to Moderate

Participants must be able to carry their own luggage, climb and descend stairs, moderate walking on uneven surfaces for 3 - 5 kilometres per day. Suitable for most fitness levels.

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

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