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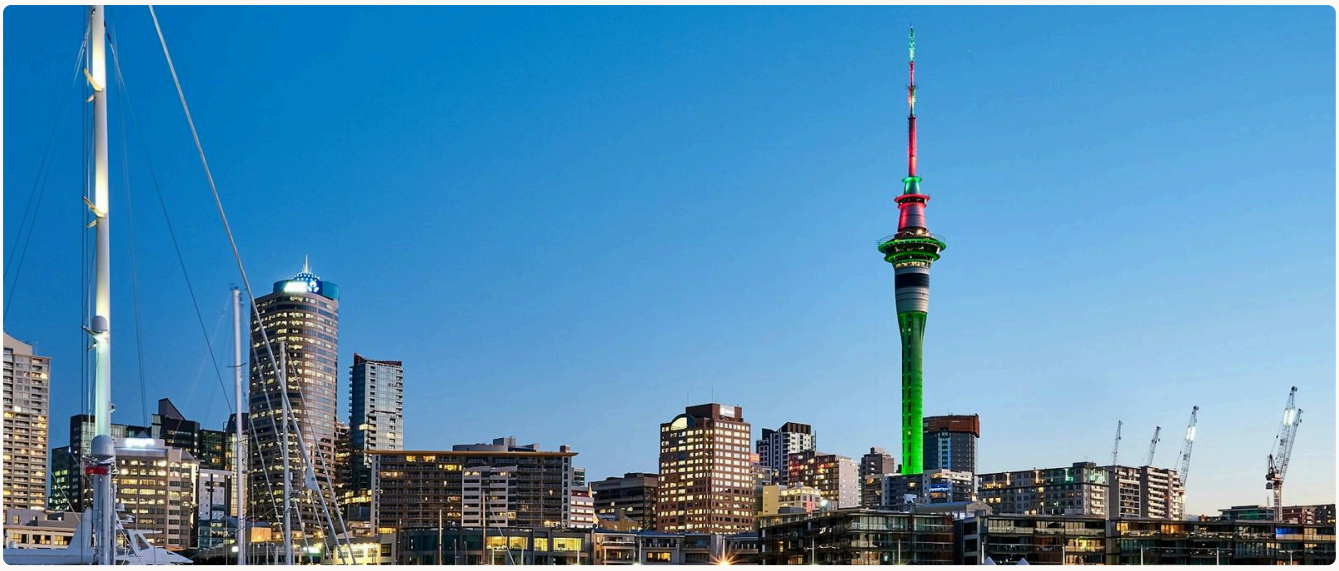

North South Discovery: Both Islands in 7 Days

NEW ZEALAND · AUCKLAND · ROTORUA · CHRISTCHURCH · QUEENSTOWN

7D 6N | 25–30 PAX | STARTS AUCKLAND | NOT INCLUDED

See essential highlights across both New Zealand islands in a compact seven-day journey. Begin in Auckland, visit Hobbiton on the way to Rotorua, and experience Te Puia by day and evening, including its geothermal valley, Māori arts, cultural performance and hāngī dinner. Fly independently from Rotorua to Queenstown, then continue to Milford Sound for a fiord cruise before returning through Aoraki Mt Cook and Lake Tekapo to Christchurch. Six nights' accommodation, transfers, guided touring and three major experiences are included; the domestic flight between islands is not. Designed for travellers whose time is limited, the route prioritises meaningful stops over superficial coverage while removing most of the ground logistics.

DAY

01

AUCKLAND · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 1

Arrive Auckland

Your arrival in Auckland is met with a private transfer to your hotel. The city sits on an isthmus between the Waitematā and Manukau harbours, with volcanic cones visible across the skyline — remnants of 53 separate eruption points on a field that is dormant rather than extinct.

Auckland Waterfront — Viaduct Harbour and the Wynyard Quarter are within easy reach of most central hotels. The ferry terminal connects to Devonport and Waiheke Island for those arriving with time to spare.

Sky Tower — At 328 metres, the observation deck gives the clearest view of Auckland's two-harbour geography. Entry own expense.

Optional: Auckland Harbour Dinner Cruise (own expense); Weta Workshop Unleashed Tour in the city (own expense).

OVERNIGHT

Auckland

DAY

02

ROTORUA · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 2

Auckland to Rotorua — via Hobbiton

The coach heads south through the Waikato to Matamata and the Alexander sheep farm that became The Shire. The set was permanently rebuilt in aluminium and concrete for The Hobbit trilogy; the specialist guide makes the visit work whether or not you know the films.

Hobbiton Movie Set Signature Tour — A guided walk through 44 hobbit holes, the mill, the double-arched bridge, and the gardens of Bag End. The guide covers both the production history and the logistics of the permanent rebuild. Allow 2 hours on set. No photography restrictions on the exterior.

Green Dragon Inn — Lunch is included at the thatched pub on the Party Field. This is the Signature Tour version, which includes a sit-down meal rather than just a drink.

Drive to Rotorua — Approximately 45 minutes from Matamata. The sulphur smell on arrival is the hydrothermal field below the city; it is stronger near the geothermal parks.

Optional: Polynesian Spa — a lakeside thermal spa on the shores of Lake Rotorua with pools fed by natural alkaline and acidic hot springs (own expense).

MEALS

Lunch

OVERNIGHT

Rotorua

DAY

03

ROTORUA · OVERNIGHT 2 OF 2

Rotorua — Te Ra and Te Po at Te Puia

A full day at Te Puia across both the daytime guided experience and the evening programme. Te Puia is built on the Whakarewarewa geothermal field in the Rotorua suburb of the same name — an area of continuous Ngāti Wāhiao occupation for over 700 years, now home to the Pōhutu Geyser, the Māori Arts and Crafts Institute, and the kiwi conservation centre.

Te Ra Guided Experience — Included. A daytime guided tour through the Whakarewarewa geothermal valley covering the active geyser field, the Arts and Crafts Institute (where master carvers and weavers work in a living apprenticeship programme), and the kiwi conservation centre. Allow 2–3 hours. The Pōhutu Geyser erupts regularly throughout the day at up to 30 metres — the largest active geyser in the Southern Hemisphere.

Te Po Indigenous Evening Experience — Included. Evening return to Te Puia for the pōwhiri welcome, kapa haka and wero (challenge), hāngī-style buffet dinner overlooking the geothermal valley, and hot chocolate on the geyser terrace. The cultural performance runs approximately 40 minutes.

Optional: Rotorua City and Lakes Tour (own expense, afternoon between the two Te Puia experiences).

MEALS

Dinner

OVERNIGHT

Rotorua

DAY

04

QUEENSTOWN · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 2

Rotorua to Queenstown — domestic flight (not included)

Today's connection to the South Island is by domestic flight, which is not included in the tour price and must be booked independently before travel. The Rotorua to Queenstown flight takes approximately 3 hours; Air New Zealand operates this route directly. Book well in advance — this sector is the pivot point of the itinerary and affects the ground arrangements from day four onward.

Rotorua Airport (ROT) — A small regional airport 10 kilometres from the city centre. Allow 90 minutes before departure for check-in. Your guide will confirm the morning drop-off arrangement.

Queenstown — A compact lakeside town on Lake Wakatipu, ringed by the Remarkables and Cecil Peak. The afternoon and evening on arrival are free; the town centre, Queenstown Hill walking track, and the waterfront are all walkable from most accommodation.

Optional: Skyline Gondola with Luge Rides — cable car to Bob's Peak at 450 metres and the luge track at the top (own expense); Original Onsen — a private outdoor hot pool overlooking the Shotover River canyon (own expense).

OVERNIGHT

Queenstown

DAY

05

MILFORD SOUND · OVERNIGHT 2 OF 2

Milford Sound — Fiordland's granite walls and year-round waterfalls

Approximately 12 hours door to door — the longest day on the itinerary, and worth being prepared for. The drive through Fiordland National Park covers 120 kilometres each way through terrain that has seen minimal modification since the glaciers retreated. Mirror lakes, the Homer Tunnel, and the hanging valleys above the main road are the waypoints on the way in.

Mirror Lakes — Small tarns off the Te Anau–Milford road that reflect the Earl Mountains on calm mornings. A 10-minute stop.

Homer Tunnel — 1.2 kilometres through the Darran Mountains, opened in 1954. Single lane with traffic managed by lights. The hanging valley approach above the portal is one of the more memorable road moments on the South Island.

Milford Sound Fiord Cruise — The fiord runs 15 kilometres inland with granite and gneiss walls rising 1,200 metres out of the water. Mitre Peak at 1,692 metres is the most photographed point. Stirling Falls and Lady Bowen Falls run year-round. Lunch included on board.

Return to Queenstown by coach, arriving early evening.

MEALS

Lunch

OVERNIGHT

Queenstown

DAY

06

CHRISTCHURCH · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 1

Queenstown to Christchurch — via Aoraki Mt Cook and Lake Tekapo

A long driving day through the Mackenzie Basin — the most varied road section on the South Island itinerary. The Kawarau Gorge, Cromwell, the Lindis Pass, Aoraki Mt Cook Village, and Lake Tekapo all fall between Queenstown and Christchurch on this route, and the landscape changes register several times across the day.

Lindis Pass (971 metres) — The main divide between Otago and the Mackenzie Basin. Tussock on both sides; one of the more photogenic stretches of road on the South Island.

Aoraki Mt Cook Village — Free time at the base of New Zealand's highest peak. The approach road along Lake Pukaki is the visual introduction; the lake's turquoise colour comes from suspended glacial rock flour. The Hooker Valley Track runs from the village toward the terminal lake below the Hooker Glacier — allow 90 minutes if you want to walk it.

Church of the Good Shepherd, Lake Tekapo — A small stone chapel built in 1935 on the lakeshore with a plain glass window framing the lake and mountains. A brief stop on the return north.

OVERNIGHT

Christchurch

DAY

07

CHRISTCHURCH

Depart Christchurch

The tour concludes with a departure transfer to Christchurch Airport. Your guide confirms pick-up timing the evening before based on your flight schedule.

Christchurch Airport (CHC) — International departures from CHC. Allow at least three hours for international check-in and immigration.

Optional: The International Antarctic Centre adjacent to the airport is worth two hours before an afternoon departure — a museum covering Antarctic exploration with a live penguin encounter and a storm simulation room (own expense).

YOUR TRIP AT A GLANCE

What's Included

DEPARTS FROM	FLIGHTS	GROUP SIZE
Auckland	**Not included**	**25–30 pax**

INCLUDED

- check Meet and greet arrival transfer in Auckland
- check 6 nights accommodation
- check Auckland to Rotorua guided coach tour via Hobbiton Movie Set
- check Hobbiton Movie Set Signature Tour with lunch at the Green Dragon Inn
- check Te Ra guided daytime experience at Te Puia — Arts and Crafts Institute, Kiwi Conservation Centre, geothermal valley
- check Te Po Indigenous Evening Experience at Te Puia — hāngī dinner and cultural performance
- check Milford Sound day tour with fiord cruise and lunch
- check Queenstown to Christchurch tour via Mt Cook Village and Lake Tekapo
- check Departure transfer to Christchurch Airport

NOT INCLUDED

- Domestic flight Rotorua to Queenstown (Day 4) — to be booked independently
- International flights
- Travel insurance
- Meals not specified in the itinerary
- Optional activities and entrance fees
- Personal expenses, laundry and minibar