

EXPLORE!

Book with confidence

New Zealand Explorer

NEW ZEALAND - TRIP CODE NZL

DISCOVERY

Why book this trip?

Combining the best of New Zealand's North and South islands, explore the land of giants and discover jaw-dropping scenery and dramatic landscapes around every corner. Sailing through mist-shrouded fjords, hiking in spectacular glacial valleys and spotting coastal wildlife on the very southern tip of the country, discover a little bit of magic at the other side of the world.

- **Doubtful Sound** - Cruise through the towering fjords of this UNESCO Heritage Site, sleeping overnight on the boat on 2021 itineraries
- **Abel Tasman** - Discover the sparkling blue waters and golden coastline of this beautiful national park, by boat and on foot
- **Hawke's Bay** - Sample authentic New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc in this famous wine-making region



INCLUDED MEALS
Breakfast: 18
Lunch: 1
Dinner: 1



TRIP STAFF
Explore Tour
Leader / Driver



TRANSPORT
Bus
Boat
Ferry



ACCOMMODATION
16 nights
comfortable hotel
2 nights
comfortable lodge



TRIP PACE:
Full on



GROUP SIZE:
10 - 15

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join trip in Auckland

Arrive in Auckland, New Zealand's largest and most diverse city. Surrounded by volcanoes and volcanic cones, beautiful beaches and rolling countryside, Auckland offers a great introduction to New Zealand. The city lies sprawled across a narrow isthmus between the harbours of Waitemata and Manukau.

For those arriving on time our Leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at 6pm for the welcome meeting. There are no activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Auckland at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive at Auckland Airport (AKL) which is around 20 minutes' drive from the hotel. Should you miss the meeting, your leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

If your flight arrives earlier in the day, perhaps you might choose to take a stroll around the city centre and wharf, or get a bird's eye view with a trip up the Sky Tower. If you are due to arrive prior to 3pm on Day 1 you may not be able to check-in to your hotel room, but baggage storage is available for you if you wish to explore the city.



ACCOMMODATION:
Cophthorne Hotel - Auckland (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel





SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Explore Auckland; visit Hobbiton and drive to the Bay of Plenty

This morning we take in the delights of Tamaki Drive and Mission Bay, during our tour of the city of Auckland.

Departing in the late morning, our journey today takes us into the heart of North Island and the diverse landscapes of the Waikato region. We visit the Hobbiton movie set at Matamata where some of the original Hobbit holes from the Lord of The Rings still sit amongst the fertile hills that lie in the shadow of the Kaimai Ranges. We will discover the real Middle Earth on the most picturesque private farmland near Matamata in a fascinating two hour guided tour. The set has been completely rebuilt and can be seen as it appeared in the films. A knowledgeable guide will accompany us through the ten-acre site recounting fascinating details of how the Hobbiton set was created. The Hobbit holes, the Mill and other structures created for The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit films can be viewed. We will then head to Whakatane, a seaside town in the sunny Bay of Plenty.



ACCOMMODATION:

White Island Rendezvous Motel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Free day on the coast; take a boat trip to a protected wildlife colony or visit the Wai-O-Tapu geothermal pools. Evening Maori banquet

We're free today to discover the beautiful area of Whakatane. Two of New Zealand's top beaches, Ohope Beach and Otarairewe Bay, are close by - Otarairewe Bay is only accessible on foot, making it one of the country's secluded jewels. Alternatively you can walk to the tumbling Wairere Falls, visit the Awakeri Hot Springs or see an art exhibit at the Whakatane Exhibition centre. There are also excursions to the nearby islands on offer; one of these is a boat trip and land-based walking tour of one of New Zealand's most protected wildlife sanctuaries on Whale Island. Here, you'll visit a fur seal colony and keep an eye out for some of New Zealand's endangered birdlife, including the tuturiwhatu (New Zealand dotterel), the red-crowned parakeet and bell birds, before swimming at the secluded hot water beach of

Sulphur Pool and even digging your own private hot pool. Alternatively, there is the possibility of taking a helicopter flight over the nearby active volcano on White Island, or of visiting the Wai-O-Tapu Geothermal Park, an impressive array of enormous hot springs located near Rotorua.

This evening we attend a traditional Te Po banquet, where we are treated to a ritual Maori welcome. We'll be introduced to the customs and traditions of the local Maori, as well as visiting the Marae (meeting house) before we have a feast prepared in a traditional hangi (underground oven). Normally fish, chicken and plenty of kumara (sweet potato) bake alongside cabbage and other root veg like pumpkin, a method of cooking that has been used by the Maori for hundreds of years.



ACCOMMODATION:

White Island Rendezvous Motel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 4 - Drive to Gisborne through the Waioeka Gorge

The road from Whakatane to Gisborne takes us through the remote Waioeka Gorge, a stunning forest-lined road winding past clear rivers and native farmland. There are plenty of stops to visit en route, which will all depend on timings and weather. These might include checking out the views from the Tauranga Suspension Bridge or many of the other rest stops along the river, which all have tracks and paths to follow so that you can stretch your legs along the route. The hikes are easy and well marked, normally varying between 15 and 45 mins.

We arrive at Gisborne in the afternoon, the first part of New Zealand to be sighted by James Cook's deckhand in 1769. Long beaches invite you to take a swim. Alternatively, take the 30 minute climb up Kaiti Hill for views across the city.



ACCOMMODATION:

Emerald Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 5 - Drive to Napier; visit Hawke's Bay vineyard

We'll continue in a southward direction, first past the coast, then over the hills and a gorge to Napier, one of the country's most famous grape-growing areas. Arriving in Napier we visit one of Hawke's Bay's oldest and most famous vineyards and take a tour, as well as enjoying a tasting of gourmet cheeses and some of the best wine that the area has to offer. Famed for its Chardonnays and superb reds, the area is home to over 80% of the country's Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah grapes, and produces some of the richest and most exquisite wines in New Zealand.

The engaging town of Napier lies on the southern edge of Hawke's Bay. Its unique collection of art deco buildings makes it one of the most popular attractions on North Island. In 1931 Napier was destroyed by a massive earthquake that registered 7.9 on the Richter Scale. Following the wholesale destruction of the city, its centre was rebuilt in the popular art deco style of the period and we'll explore a little of this heritage during an expert-led walking tour with the art deco society of Napier.



ACCOMMODATION:
Quality Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Free time in Napier; drive to Wellington

Today we head south, towards New Zealand's capital, Wellington, who's engaging mix of culture and art, combined with stunning harbour views and a backdrop of steep hills and forest, makes it one of the country's most captivating cities. On arrival we will have some free time take a wander through Wellington's quirky city streets. This afternoon we will visit the superb Te Papa National Museum, one of the finest museums in the world, filled with a staggering collection of Maori treasures, artworks and a unique Marae.



ACCOMMODATION:
West Plaza Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 7 - Free day to explore the capital

Today is a free day to explore the diverse city of Wellington, with several options for you to do. The top of the cable car, a Wellington icon running from Lambton Quay, gives a great close-up view of the city. From here, you can visit the Observatory and stroll back through Botanic Gardens, extending all the way down to the parliamentary complex. The Parliament's Buildings, including the 'Beehive', are well worth visiting. Apart from its importance as the political centre, the city offers a large cultural choice of museums and art galleries and an abundance of cafes, restaurants and boutique shops, many situated around Cuba Street. You could visit Zealandia and see some of New Zealand's rarest birds, reptiles and insects living wild in their natural environment, including the hihi, tuatara, saddleback, kaka and (at night) little spotted kiwi. Or simply enjoy a leisurely stroll along the harbourside, which is particularly beautiful on a fine day or when lit up in the evening.



ACCOMMODATION:
West Plaza Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 8 - Ferry across the Cook Strait to Picton; drive to Nelson

This morning we cross the Cook Strait and make our way to the bustling port of Picton, at the head of the picturesque Queen Charlotte Sound. On arrival we drive west, following the coastline of the South Island to the town of Nelson. A lively city on New Zealand's northwest coast, Nelson is a haven for hikers, beachgoers and kayaking fans, and is often known as the 'sunshine capital' of the country. Located next to the wine making region of Marlborough, Nelson also has its fair share of wineries as well as being a great starting point for visiting the Abel Tasman National Park, full of golden sandy beaches, rocky outcrops,

seals and forest birds. Our hotel is located just outside the city, so after taking some time to explore, our tour leader will drive us on to our hotel.



ACCOMMODATION:
Harbourside Motor Lodge (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Lodge



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 9 - Explore the Abel Tasman National Park by boat and on foot

Today we explore New Zealand's coastal paradise, the Abel Tasman National Park, discovering its pristine waters and secluded coves by boat and on foot. Taking a water taxi from Kaiteriteri Beach, we'll glide through the cobalt blue ocean to the golden beach at Torrent Bay. The shallow waters here mean our final approach to the beach will be in adventurous fashion - wading through the shallows! From here, we'll take a leisurely two-three hour walk through the lush native forest towards Medlands Beach, crossing an impressive suspension bridge as well as numerous coves en route. Medlands Beach has some of the whitest sand around, and on arrival we'll have time for a packed lunch (not included, but our Tour Leader will help us to collect snacks and food to bring along), as well as a swim, before taking the water taxi back to Kaiteriteri. Our route today is a small section of one of New Zealand's 'Great Walks' - the Abel Tasman Coastal Path - and the water taxi service here gives us the great opportunity to discover it in just a day.

Tidal considerations could mean that we complete the walk in the opposite direction, or change the route to accommodate weather or sea conditions.



ACCOMMODATION:
Harbourside Motor Lodge (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Lodge



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE





MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 10 - Scenic drive on the Great Coast Road to Hokitika

We have an early start today as we head down the Great Coast Road towards of Hokitika at the mouth of the Hokitika River. This journey takes us on one of the greatest coastal drives in the world, passing through Punakaiki Rocks, where we'll stop to visit the amazing coastal rock formations, as well as taking in the seal colony at Cape Foulwind. The wild and rugged beauty of the west coast surrounds us on our journey, before finally arriving into the old gold mining town later this afternoon.

Founded in 1864, Hokitika was once a thriving community of over 30,000 until the end of the gold seams saw its population drift away. Today it is home to around 4,000 people and as well as gold still being found here, it is also home to New Zealand greenstone (similar to jade), with a prolific number of craft galleries and open studios. It still retains something of its frontier spirit though and a stroll through its historic heart makes for an interesting diversion. The town was put back on the map in 2013, after it was used as the gold-rush era setting of the winner of the 2013 Man Booker prize, Eleanor Catton's *The Luminaries*. If the weather is clear, the sunsets from Hokitika are amazing, and there is a handily-named Sunset Point that looks over the beach - perfect for a cold beer or fish and chips as you watch the sun go down.



ACCOMMODATION:
Beachfront Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 11 - Visit Franz Josef Glacier en route to Fox Glacier

Crossing the Hokitika River this morning we head south on a short two hour drive to Fox Glacier, passing through native bush of Rimu (red pine) and Kahikatea (white pine). The first European to discover the west coast was Abel Tasman in December 1642. Long and thin and enclosed by the Tasman Sea to the east and the Southern Alps to the west, it is a land of glacial deposits and alluvium that flows from the rivers and glaciers of the Alps. There are some 60 glaciers in the park, but Franz Josef and Fox are the most famous. Up to 10 years ago the Franz Josef Glacier was one of the few glaciers worldwide that actually crept down below the vegetation line. Today however this glacier has receded so much that you can only see the terminal face at a distance. Needless to say the whole landscape of this glacial region is quite fascinating and there are a number of optional excursions available today, including glacier valley walks (short walks that within the old valley of the glacier), heli-hikes that take you up onto the glacier itself and scenic helicopter flights over both Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers. We overnight in Fox Glacier town.



ACCOMMODATION:
Heartland Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 12 - Explore Fox Glacier then travel to Wanaka

A short drive south this morning brings to the breathtaking setting of Lake Matheson, where weather permitting we are treated to a picture perfect image of Aoraki/Mount Cook reflected in the lake's dark, mirrored waters. Following this we will head to Fox Glacier, named after a former Prime Minister of New Zealand. The walking track from the car park along the glacial valley crosses a landscape of ancient moraine that testifies to the continual advance and retreat of the glacier over the centuries. Our journey then continues across the River Haast and away from the coast, passing through the beautiful scenery of the Haast River Valley as we snake our way through the Aspiring National Park and onto the town of Makaroa. After a brief stop to refresh, we head next for the lakeside setting of Wanaka, impressively situated amongst an encircling ring of mountain peaks before the still waters of the lake.



ACCOMMODATION:
Wanaka Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 13 - Free day in Wanaka

Wanaka is one of the favourite vacation spots for New Zealander's because of its beautiful environment. Mount Aspiring dominates this area with its glaciers. Today is at your leisure, and there are a number of

optional activities to choose from, including an exhilarating jet boat ride and wilderness walk through moss-covered forest, waterfalls and glacier-fed streams. Alternatively, there is the option to take a boat across Lake Wanaka to the remote Mou Waho Island Nature Reserve, which is predator-free and home to the rare flightless Buff Weka (extinct on the mainland since 1920). Wanaka is a hikers paradise so there are plenty of other walking trails in the vicinity, from short 1 hour hikes to full day trails.



ACCOMMODATION:
Wanaka Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 14 - Visit Queenstown and see glowworms en route to Te Anau

We'll drive out of Wanaka this morning in the direction of Queenstown, on the shore of Lake Wakatipu. Before arriving there we stop en route at the pretty goldmining town of Arrowtown, and discover some of New Zealand's gold rush history with its clapperboard buildings and historic Chinese settlement. From there, we continue to the adventure capital of New Zealand, Queenstown, where we'll experience some of the resort-like nature of the place and take a short walk around the foreshore and town.

After a short time in Queenstown, we will continue to the small town of Te Anau, the gateway to New Zealand's Fjordland National Park. The town is visually stunning, on the banks of Lake Te Anau from which the town takes its name. According to Maori legend, somewhere around the shores of the lake was located a cave filled with iridescent light. There are numerous caves around this area, but in 1948 the entrance to a series of limestone cave was discovered, which was home to hundreds of glowworms - perhaps the history behind the ancient legend. This afternoon we will go to visit the glowworms, travelling across Lake Te Anau by boat to reach them. At 12,000 years old, the caves are still relatively young, and continue to be carved out by the torrent of water that flows through them. This has created a twisting network of passages hiding whirlpools, sculpted rock features and an underground waterfalls. Exploring the caves on a small boat, we'll finally visit the small glowworm grotto. In the darkness, the glittering light is quite mesmerising.



ACCOMMODATION:
Kingsgate Te Anau (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 15 - Take a cruise on the magnificent Doubtful Sound; drive to Dunedin

We have a long day ahead of us, but worth it to explore the UNESCO World Heritage Fjordland National Park, a fantastic experience of New Zealand's wild nature. We drive along the southern coast to reach Lake Manapouri, which we traverse by boat to West Arm. We then board a coach to travel over Wilmot Pass through dense rainforest. There are opportunities along the way to examine the plant life and view the spectacular scenery. In Deep Cove we will embark on the majestic Fiordland Navigator boat. As we cruise through some of New Zealand's most stunning scenery, our knowledgeable nature guides will provide commentary - be it on the pod of resident dolphins, fur seals or penguins that we may encounter.

After a day on the boat, we return to Deep Cove, and then drive back to Lake Manapouri, traverse it by boat and continue on to Dunedin, the city they call the 'Edinburgh of the South', arriving in the late evening.



ACCOMMODATION:
Kingsgate Hotel Dunedin (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

DAY 16 - Free morning; afternoon wildlife cruise to see albatross

Dunedin was settled by Scottish settlers in the middle years of the 19th century and today is a picturesque setting of towers and spires that still retains something of its Gaelic heritage. This morning is free to enjoy the town - you may wish to visit Larnach Castle or St Paul's Cathedral, and enjoy a hearty meal and a beer at Speight's Brewery.

In the afternoon we'll regroup and travel to the Otago Peninsula, where we board a boat for our wildlife cruise around Weller's Rock and Tairua Head. We'll see uninterrupted views of the world's only mainland nesting place of albatross, and we may be lucky enough to see them soaring and banking, with their three metre wingspan unfurling overhead. We'll also see the New Zealand fur seals playing on the rocks around

their breeding rookeries, with expert guides telling us all about these beautiful creatures.



ACCOMMODATION:
Kingsgate Hotel Dunedin (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 17 - Drive to Mackenzie Country via the Moeraki Boulders

After a short visit to Dunedin's city gardens, we head up the coast to view the incredible boulders that lie strewn across Moeraki Beach before continuing to the limestone town of Oamaru, which has the best-preserved Victorian precinct in New Zealand. It was from here the the world's first frozen meat products were exported by boat. A steam punk museum, distillery and quirky shops make this an interesting before we continue to the rural town of Twizel. Twizel is the largest town in Mackenzie Country, but at under 1500 inhabitants that's not really saying a great deal! It sits within the International Dark Sky Reserve, where the Milky Way seems to be in high definition when the sun goes down.



ACCOMMODATION:
Mackenzie Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 18 - Drive to Christchurch

This morning we have the chance to explore the dramatic vistas of the Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park. There is a helicopter flight on offer, taking us directly over Aoraki/Mount Cook and the stunning

park. Alternatively, weather-dependent we may drive into the park for a walk on one of the many trails, some are only 30 minutes long but even this is enough to be seriously impressed by the park's towering mountains and glaciers. We then continue towards Christchurch, stopping en route at the glacial Lake Pukaki, where we have the opportunity to admire the magnificent glaciers of Mount Cook (weather permitting). The Maori name for the highest peak in New Zealand is Aoraki, which translates as the 'Cloud Piercer'. We also stop at Lake Tekapo and visit the 'Church of the Good Shepherd', the oldest church in New Zealand. The view from the church window over the Lake and up to the snow-covered mountains of the Southern Alps is particularly beautiful. We arrive to our final destination in the late afternoon.



ACCOMMODATION:
Heartland Hotel Cotswold (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 19 - Trip ends in Christchurch

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Christchurch.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Christchurch at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day, luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you need to depart from Christchurch International Airport (airport code: CHC), which is approximately a 15 minute drive from our hotel.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Climate and country information

New Zealand

Climate

New Zealand's climate is maritime: mild and pleasant with abundant sunshine, high rainfall and a few extremes of heat and cold. However, settled weather cannot be counted on at any time of year - all seasons can be experienced in one day! Generally the summer months (Nov-April) are warmest and most pleasant, with least rainfall. In the Southern Alps temperatures can fluctuate dramatically. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
-12	3 Pin Flat	Christian	English

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Auckland - Sky tower NZ\$32;

Whakatane - White Island by helicopter NZ\$1095; Whale Island wildlife sanctuary boat trip NZ\$119

Wellington - Cable car NZ\$9; Zealandia NZ\$19.50; guided by day NZ\$55 or by night NZ\$85

Gisborne - Wine tasting - from approximately NZ\$20-50 depending on numbers

Wanaka - Jet boat and walk from NZ\$239; Lake cruise and nature walk NZ\$245

Fox Glacier and Mt Cook - Helicopter flights; NZ\$245-480 (from scenic glacier flights to heli-hikes)

Dunedin - Speights brewery NZ\$30; Lanarch Castle NZ\$34;

Clothing

You will need a mixture of lightweight and warmer clothing - merino wool is particularly good in cooler weather. Good rain gear is essential as is warm upper body clothing. Please note that most accommodation in New Zealand has laundry facilities - washing machines and driers - available for guest use, and hairdryers are available in most places. Bring swimwear too.

Footwear

Comfortable shoes/trekking trainers. Sandals and/or old training shoes are useful if you want to do any whitewater rafting.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and a daypack. A backpack or soft holdall with wheels may prove more convenient, as you will be required to carry your luggage to/from on/off coaches, trains and ferries.

Equipment

Bring a torch, a water bottle and sunscreen. Due to increased exposure risk in New Zealand, we recommend a minimum of SPF 30+. Due to lack of ozone, burn times are drastically reduced and adequate protection is a vital part of your holiday. Walking poles are useful on some walks, and you might want to have a small travel towel for the walk at Abel Tasman; this will be useful on the beach as well as for drying off feet after the wet landing.

Sandflies can be particularly bad on the west coast of the South Island. While their bites do not carry any disease, they can be particularly irritating and itchy for some people. Good insect repellents need to be carried (best purchased in New Zealand, as these are specific for the New Zealand sandfly). A good effective mild analgesic is available to soothe any bites.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. However, you might want to recognise a leader that's done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It's a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we'd recommend between £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline

New Zealand

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£14	£20.00 - 24.00	£3	£1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

N.Z. Dollar.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

You can purchase New Zealand currency from home, otherwise we recommend £GBP or \$US.

Where To Exchange

Banks or 'Forex' offices in main towns/cities only.

ATM Availability

ATMs are available in all main towns.

Credit Card Acceptance

All major credit cards are accepted at all locations.

Travellers Cheques

Can be exchanged at banks and exchange offices.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Boat, Ferry

Accommodation notes

During this tour we use a mixture of hotels and motels, usually centrally located and perfect for exploring New Zealand's mixture of interesting towns and stunning nature. For 2021 itineraries we have an overnight cruise on the Doubtful Sound, during which you will be staying in twin-share cabins with private bathrooms.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK citizens, check the latest Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office advice.

Please refer to our COVID-19 entry requirements page for any country-specific conditions of entry. Whilst we strive to update this on a regular basis we recommend you also check the FCDO website for the latest advice on entry requirements in this fast-evolving situation. Information can change at any time.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

New Zealand: Travellers must have an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) to travel to NZ as well as having to pay an International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy (IVL). You can obtain these via the mobile

ETA app or the immigration.govt.nz website.

ETA - The cost of the ETA is NZD\$ 9 via the mobile app or NZD\$ 12 via the Immigration New Zealand website.

IVL - The cost of the IVL is NZD\$35. Visitors pay the IVL when they apply for a visa or ETA either on the ETA App or immigration website.

We recommend you to allow at least 72 hours for processing

Once issued these are valid for 2 years or until your passport expires and can be used for multiple visits. Travellers should allow 72 hours for processing.

USA: (including those in transit) Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) - where you apply for an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), which applies if you enter the country by sea or by air. This must be done on line - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> no later than 72 hours prior to travel. Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be refused boarding.

You must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. UK passports which are biometric feature a small gold symbol (camera) at the bottom of the front cover.

If you have visited Iraq, Syria, Iran or Sudan since 2011 or are dual nationals of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA and instead you will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are unable to provide a valid visa before boarding flights to the US, or entering via another method, you may not be permitted to travel.

Please note for your ESTA application you will be required to supply Point of Contact information. Explore's USA contact information will be listed on your final documentation which you will receive approximately 3-4 weeks before departure. If you are leaving for the USA before this, please call the Explore team to get this information. (Not necessary if in transit)

For further information please check out the US embassy website. Visa applications - <http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html>

Canada: An electronic travel authorisation (ETA) is required by British citizens transiting via Canada. For more information see the official Canadian government website:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp>

Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

Find out more about [Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions](#) before you book.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them here.

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Ability to swim

An ability to swim is essential for your safe enjoyment of the water based activities on this trip. If you wish to participate in these activities then we insist that you are able to swim.

New Zealand

Vaccinations

Nothing required. Tetanus recommended Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Additional Information



Why book this trip

Planning and organising a trip through New Zealand can be a full-time endeavour. This three-week trip removes any stress as we take you through the most scenic parts of this incredible country, with visits to the highlights as well as options to make this tour your own, whether you prefer adrenaline, wildlife or pure relaxation.

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**