



Essential New Zealand – 7 Day itinerary

New Zealand's compact size, efficient transport network and diverse range of activities allows guests to experience a lot in a short amount of time. Begin in New Zealand's largest city, Auckland, and travel south to the impressive depths of Waitomo's glowworm caves before continuing to New Zealand's Māori culture and geothermal capital, Rotorua.

From there it's on to the South Island, to spectacular Queenstown, the adventure capital of the world, and the breathtaking fiords of Milford and Doubtful Sound, rich in native flora and fauna.

Day one

Auckland

Get acquainted with vibrant and multicultural Auckland on a walk around the city's stunning waterfront.

For a birds-eye view of the city, the 328-metre-high (1,076 ft) [Sky Tower](#) can't be beaten. New Zealand's tallest building offers thrill seekers the chance to test their nerves on a SkyWalk around its 192-metre-high (630 ft) walkway or SkyJump from it.

Day two

Auckland

Nature-lovers and entertainment-buffs will appreciate Auckland's rugged west coast. Popular TV shows *Xena and Hercules*, and Academy-Award winning movie *The Piano* were filmed here, with the pristine native bush, coastal rainforest and black sand beaches providing the perfect backdrop.

Auckland's also great if you're more inclined to indulge in a spot of retail therapy. Explore Britomart precinct and nearby High Street in the city centre or venture into the up-market suburbs of Newmarket, Parnell and Ponsonby. Keep an eye out for the boutiques of acclaimed New Zealand designer labels such as Karen Walker, Kate Sylvester, World and Zambesi.

Day three

Auckland, Waitomo and Rotorua

Two and a half hours' drive south of Auckland, the town of [Waitomo](#) is home to an underground labyrinth of caves, rivers and glowworms.

Explore the caves on a guided walking and boat tour or, if you're feeling more adventurous, try a black water rafting tour. Black water rafting allows you to abseil into some of the harder to access parts of the cave system and navigate your way along the underground rivers by inflatable rubber inner tube.

From Waitomo, head east to Rotorua, New Zealand's Māori culture and geothermal activity capital. Here you can take in a cultural performance or marvel over bubbling mud pools, dramatic geysers and natural hot springs.

Day four

Rotorua

Rotorua is home to many unique adventure activities. Race downhill in a three-wheel luge cart at [Skyline Rotorua](#) or ride some of New Zealand's best mountain biking tracks in nearby [Whakarewarewa Forest](#). The Forest's extensive network of mountain biking trails caters for riders of all levels and has hosted premier mountain biking events including the World Mountain Bike & Trails Champs.

[Rainbow Springs Wildlife Park](#) and the [Agrodome](#) are two of Rotorua's most popular attractions. Rainbow Springs is a great place to spot native New Zealand flora and fauna, including the kiwi bird, while the Agrodome's award-winning Sheep Show and farm tours provide a wonderful insight into rural New Zealand.

Relax and unwind at Rotorua's [Polynesian Spa](#) with a dip in the hot springs or a luxurious spa treatment.

Day five

Rotorua and Queenstown

Now that you've seen some of the best the North Island has to offer, it's time to head south to [Queenstown](#) to experience pure inspiration amongst some of the world's greatest scenery.

Adrenaline junkies can indulge in a wide range of adventure activities in Queenstown, including bungee jumping, sky diving, jet boating, white water rafting and hang gliding. In winter, Queenstown is a snow lover's paradise. There are six ski fields nearby offering opportunities for snow sports including skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing and tubing.

Those after a more relaxing experience can head to nearby wineries in the [Gibbston Valley](#) for tastings or a delicious alfresco lunch.

A gondola ride up Bob's Peak offers some of the most spectacular views of the Queenstown area, particularly at sunset.

Day six

Milford and Doubtful Sound

From Queenstown, join a one day tour to the stunning fiords of Milford Sound or Doubtful Sound. Travel to your destination by coach and take in the scenery on a boat cruise or guided kayaking trip. Flight transfers are also available between Queenstown and Milford Sound for those who want to take in one of New Zealand's most beautiful regions by air.

Milford Sound, set amidst a landscape of majestic mountains, native forest and beautiful waterfalls, was described by author Rudyard Kipling as the eighth wonder of the world. Doubtful Sound is sometimes called the 'sound of silence' and is home to bottlenose dolphins and fur seals. In season, you may also catch a glimpse of the rare Fiordland Crested Penguin.

Day seven

Queenstown and Auckland

Enjoy breakfast at one of the cafes or restaurants on the shores of Lake Wakatipu, before getting in some last-minute shopping at some of Queenstown's boutiques.

With some of the best New Zealand has to offer fresh in your mind, it's time to return to Auckland for your flight home.