GO AHEAD TOURS



New Zealand: Untamed Landscapes

16 days | 19 days with Fiji extension

This island nation is known for its stunningly varied range of natural landscapes; you'll understand why when you cruise through the fjords of Milford Sound or ascend the peaks of the Southern Alps. Amid these spectacular untamed settings, you'll get a taste of the welcoming Kiwi culture on this small group Adventure Tour.



Your tour package includes

13 nights in handpicked hotels
13 breakfasts
5 dinners with beer or wine
1 wine tasting
3 tastings
9 sightseeing tours
Expert Tour Director & local guides
Private deluxe motor coach
1 ferry transfer

Included highlights

Milford Sound
Waiho River walk
Kiwi home-hosted dinner
Abel Tasman National Park
Marlborough wine tasting
Wellington
Te Papa Tongarewa museum
Rainbow Springs Kiwi Wildlife Park
Maori culture and village visit
Waitomo Glowworm Caves

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least about 2 hours daily across mostly flat terrain, including unpaved trails, with few hills and steep stairs.

Group size

10–22

© 2024 EF Education First

New Zealand: Untamed Landscapes

16 days | 19 days with Fiji extension

Overnight Flight → 2 nights

Day 1: Travel day
Cross the International Date Line in flight and "lose" a day.

Day 2: Travel day
Your flight continues to New Zealand.

Queenstown → 3 nights

Day 3: Arrival in Queenstown
Included meals: welcome dinner
Welcome to New Zealand! Meet your Tour Director and fellow travelers at tonight's welcome dinner.

Day 4: Milford Sound
Included meals: breakfast, tasting
Head out to explore the breathtaking Milford Sound in New Zealand's Fiordland National Park, home to some of the most memorable scenery in the world.

- Travel through the Five Rivers farming region and past Lake Te'Anau
- Pass through beautiful beech forests and stop at the glittering Mirror Lakes
- Sip on a glass of wine as you cruise around Milford Sound, in view of Mitre Peak
- See the temperate rainforest and waterfalls that line the shores of the picturesque sound
- Try to spot dolphins, penguins, seals, and whales *(seasonal)*

Day 5: Free day in Queenstown
Included meals: breakfast
Spend a free day in Queenstown or add excursions.
+ Central Otago Wine Tasting & Dinner
+ Kayaking on Lake Wakatipu

Franz Josef Glacier → 1 night

Day 6: Transfer to Franz Josef Glacier
Included meals: breakfast
Enjoy a scenic drive through the island's Southern Alps to Franz Josef Glacier, stopping at Lake Hawea, Lake Wānaka, Knight's Point, and Thunder Creek Falls along the way.

Please note: On some departures, you may stay overnight in Fox Glacier.

Punakaiki → 1 night

Day 7: Waiho River walk & transfer to Punakaiki
Included meals: breakfast, dinner
This morning, join a local guide for a hike along the Waiho River in the Franz Josef Glacier valley.

- Walk alongside the Waiho River bed, which is fed by the melting snow and ice from Franz Josef Glacier
- Admire the snowcapped glacier and verdant landscape within the valley
- Learn about the glacier's history and how it got the name Kā Roimata o Hine Hukatere in Māori culture

Enjoy a free late-morning at Franz Josef Glacier or add an excursion.
Please note: This excursion is weather-dependent and may be offered on day 6.
Then, transfer down the scenic west coat of the South Island to Punakaiki. Settle in to your eco-friendly seaside hotel before sitting down for an included dinner.
+ Franz Josef Glacier Helicopter Ride

Abel Tasman Region → 2 nights

Day 8: Abel Tasman Region via Punakaiki
Included meals: breakfast, dinner
Leave Hokitika behind as you set out for your eco-hotel in the Abel Tasman region, making scenic stops en route.

- Join your Tour Director for a walk along a trail to the distinctive "pancake" rocks in Punakaiki
- Learn how salt water and wind have weathered the limestone as you admire views of the coastline and mountains
- View natural forming blowholes and caves formed by sea erosion
- Stop at the Cape Foulwind Seal Colony to see the area's famous residents
- Pass through the dramatic Buller Gorge before arriving in the Abel Tasman region

Tonight, join a local Kiwi family at their house and enjoy a home-cooked meal featuring traditional food and drink.

Day 9: Abel Tasman National Park & cruise
Included meals: breakfast
Head out to explore Abel Tasman National Park with your Tour Director.

- Journey by boat through the South Island's pristine coves and turquoise waters
- Visit breathtaking Kaiteriteri Beach
- Enjoy free time to explore the national park

Please note: For an additional cost, you can book hiking, paddle boarding, and kayaking activities through your Tour Director.
Spend free time in the Abel Tasman region or add an excursion.
+ Waka Tour: Traditional Māori Canoe Adventure

Wellington → 2 nights

Day 10: Wellington via Marlborough
Included meals: breakfast, wine tasting
On your way to Wellington, stop for a wine tasting in Marlborough.

- Sip four of the region's signature wines, including its renowned sauvignon blanc
- Enjoy some light snacks like bread, cheese, olives, caviar, and cured meats

Then, board a ferry in Picton for a scenic cruise across the Cook Strait to the city of Wellington on the North Island.

Day 11: Sightseeing tour of Wellington
Included meals: breakfast
Get to know Wellington, the southernmost capital city of any sovereign state, on a guided tour led by your Tour Director.

- Take in views of the city from Mount Victoria
- Walk along the Wellington waterfront
- Explore the interactive exhibitions at Te Papa Tongarewa, New Zealand's national museum, on a self-guided tour

Please note: The sightseeing tour of Wellington may move to day 10 on some departures.
Spend a free evening in Wellington or add an excursion.
+ Zealandia Ecosanctuary Nighttime Wildlife Walk

Rotorua → 2 nights

Day 12: Transfer to Rotorua
Included meals: breakfast, dinner
Head to Rotorua, which is located in the heart of the North Island's Maori country. Make photo stop along the way at Lake Taupo and Tongariro National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Visit a Maori village this evening and sit down to a traditional hangi feast of specialties that have been cooking in the steaming ground.

Day 13: Sightseeing tour of the Rotorua Region
Included meals: breakfast, tasting
Set off on a sightseeing tour of the Rotorua region today.

- Learn about Operation Nest Egg at Rainbow Springs Kiwi Wildlife Park, New Zealand's largest kiwi hatchery
- Visit the village of Whakarewarewa, which is home to thermal springs and bubbling hot pools
- Join a local Whakarewarewa guide to learn about the lifestyle and traditions of the Maori people, who live in harmony with nature in the village
- Try some traditional sweet corn, which is cooked in geothermal hot pools
- Visit Rotorua's Government Gardens, a public park and site of great historical importance to the local Maori people
- Take a guided tour of an Agrodome, a unique type of farm where you'll see a variety of animals as well as a fruit orchard and olive grove
- Sample kiwi and honey produced on-site before enjoying free time to shop

Please note: For an additional cost, you can book a tour of the Hobbiton movie set through your Tour Director.

Auckland → 2 nights

Day 14: Auckland via Waitomo
Included meals: breakfast
En route to Auckland, stop at Waitomo Caves to try your hand at spelunking. Then, take a subterranean cruise to view the remarkable Glowworm Grotto on a guided tour.
Later, take a walk along Auckland Harbour with your Tour Director.
Please note: For an additional cost, you can book a dinner at the Sky Tower through your Tour Director.

Day 15: Free day in Auckland
Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner
Enjoy a free day in Auckland or add an excursion. This evening, celebrate your trip with your fellow travelers at a farewell dinner.
+ A Day on Waiheke Island: Olive Oil & Wine Tasting

Flight Home

Day 16: Departure
Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)
Transfer to the airport for your flight home or extend your stay to explore Fiji.

+ Fiji extension

Fly to Fiji to continue your trip and discover what makes the island the definition of paradise. It definitely has something to do with all those palm trees and totally perfect beaches, which you'll have plenty of time to get familiar with.

Fiji → 3 nights

Day 16: Arrival in Fiji
Included meals: breakfast
Fly to Nadi, Fiji, and transfer to your seaside hotel.

Day 17: Free day in Fiji
Included meals: breakfast
Enjoy a free day in Fiji or add an excursion.
+ A Day on Tivua Island: Sailing & Snorkeling

Day 18: Sightseeing tour of Nadi Market & Viseisei Village
Included meals: breakfast, dinner
Get to know Fiji's indigenous culture and traditions today.

- Walk through the fruit and vegetable stalls at Nadi Market with your Tour Director
- Set off to Viseisei Village, one of the oldest settlements in Fiji
- Taste kava, a ceremonial beverage, during a traditional welcome ritual
- Take a walking tour of the village
- Learn to collect, husk, and extract milk from coconuts during a hands-on demonstration
- Finish your day with a farewell drink before you return to your hotel

Then, sit down for an included dinner featuring local seafood this evening.

Flight Home

Day 19: Departure
Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)
Spend the afternoon relaxing in a dayroom, then transfer to the airport for your flight home.

Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save $10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: **goaheadtours.com/NZL | 1-800-597-0350**

Day 5: Central Otago Wine Tasting & Dinner
$129/$139* (4 hours, departs in the afternoon, dinner included)
Make your way to the Central Otago wine region for a tasting of locally produced varietals. This area of New Zealand is known for its smooth pinot noir's and for being the world's southernmost wine-producing region. You'll learn the proper way to sip wine while hearing about the notes and flavors found in the local wines. Then, sit down to enjoy an included dinner at a local restaurant before heading back to Queenstown.

Day 5: Kayaking on Lake Wakatipu
$79/$89* (1.5 hours, departs in the morning)
One look at Lake Wakatipu and you'll see why it's one of the most stunning sites in New Zealand. The tree-lined shores and views of the Remarkables are even more beautiful when you see them from the water, which is exactly what you'll do. Head to Queenstown Bay to learn kayaking basics before you paddle out into Lake Wakatipu. You'll kayak around the lake for 45 minutes as you admire the natural landscapes surrounding Queenstown from a new perspective. Please note: This excursion is an independent kayaking excursion and travelers will not be joined by a guide. It is also weather-dependent. Each traveler will be provided and fitted with a lifejacket.

Day 7: Franz Josef Glacier Helicopter Ride
$235/$245* (1 hour, departs in the morning)
Get close to the ice falls of Franz Josef Glacier during a 20-minute helicopter ride and experience the solitude of a snow landing in this natural alpine wonderland. Please note: This excursion is weather-dependent. Depending on hotel location, you may leave from Fox Glacier on some departures.

Day 9: Waka Tour: Traditional Māori Canoe Adventure
$109/$119* (3 hours, departs in the morning)
Hop inside a waka, a traditional Māori canoe, and admire the beauty of Abel Tasman National Park from the water. The Māori people traditionally used wakas to fish and travel long distances. You'll learn the tikanga, or etiquette, associated with steering a waka and familiarize yourself with the canoe. Then, receive a karakia, or blessing, for protection before you set sail. Paddle to Split Apple Rock and soak in the views from one of the most scenic spots on the coastline. You'll learn more about why the waka is an integral part of Māori culture from your local guide. End your trip with another karakia. Please note: This excursion is weather-dependent.

Day 11: Zealandia Ecosanctuary Nighttime Wildlife Walk
$105/$115* (3 hours, departs in the evening)
When the day ends and the sun sets on Zealandia Ecosanctuary, a variety of nocturnal animals are just waking up. You'll join a guide for an evening walk by torchlight to learn about the nocturnal sights and sounds in New Zealand's native forest. Some of the most frequently observed animals include insects in the wētā family, glowworms, and tuataras. You may also see some of the 150 little spotted kiwis that call Zealandia home. Your guide will talk about New Zealand's natural history and its significance to Māori culture. Plus, they'll point out many of the rare and endangered species that can only be viewed at night. End the tour in the visitors center to sip kawakawa, a hot herbal tea the Māori people drink for its health benefits.

Day 15: A Day on Waiheke Island: Olive Oil & Wine Tasting
$145/$155* (6.5 hours, departs in the morning, tasting included)
Board a ferry and settle in for a scenic cruise across the Auckland Harbour to Waiheke Island. Upon arrival at the wharf, take in spectacular views of the Hauraki Gulf and the Coromandel Peninsula as you drive along the scenic northern route. Visit Rangihoua Estate, a bustling olive oil mill. The first olive oils from the North Island were produced here and since then, Rangihoua has created many award-winning olive oils. Here, you'll learn how the oil is produced and taste a range of different oils such as the peppery Greek-style Koreneiki, the Spanish-style Picual, or the Tuscan-style Frantoio, as well as island blends. Additionally, you'll get to taste their local honey and herb spread. Continue on to Peacock Sky, a boutique vineyard, for a wine tasting. The owners create sparkling wine, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Merlot malbec on-site. You'll sample some of these wines paired with light snacks. End the day in Oneroa Village where you'll have free time to eat lunch at a local cafe or restaurant, or visit the many art galleries and boutique shops. With the beach close by, you may also take some time to explore the coast and soak in the spectacular views. Then, board the ferry back to Auckland.

Extension excursion options

Day 17: A Day on Tivua Island: Sailing & Snorkeling
$145/$155* (7 hours, departs in the morning, lunch included)
Set sail on a scenic cruise to Fiji's Tivua Island, a small tropical paradise surrounded by stunning coral reefs. When you're not enjoying afternoon tea or an included buffet lunch, the day will be yours to spend as you'd like. Soak up some sun on the white-sand beach or lounge in a hammock for the ultimate in relaxation. When you're ready to cool off, paddle around the island in a kayak, board a glass-bottom boat with a marine biologist, or hop in the water for guided snorkeling. Back on shore, there will be plenty of opportunities to get acquainted with local culture as you take part in a traditional Kava ceremony, watch a coconut husking demonstration, or learn about herbal medicine on a nature walk. Please note: The Fijian sun is very hot and bringing a sun hat and sunscreen is recommended. If you'd like to enjoy the water, be sure to pack a towel and swimwear.

*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at goaheadtours.com/terms