

## **Active New Zealand Adventure**

December 27, 2019 – January 13, 2020

Fly from the USA on Friday 27 December 2019, arriving in Auckland, New Zealand on Sunday 29 December 2019. Participants arrange their own flight schedule.

### **Sunday 29 December 2019                      Auckland**

Welcome to New Zealand. You will be met at the Auckland Airport, by your NZET agent, after you pass through security, and will be transferred to to your centrally located hotel. Time is your own to explore the city. The official program starts at 6:00 p.m. with a welcome reception and we meet with Dave & Pat Van Wylen, our tour manager, and fellow travelers followed by a walk to the 328-meter tall Skytower where we will enjoy the 360° view of Auckland while indulging in a superb dinner at the top. Accommodation: Mercure Hotel (HD)



### **Monday 30 December 2019                      Auckland to Paihia**

As we travel north, we visit the Kauri Museum, which tells its story from the colonial viewpoint and presents its representation of the kauri gum industry as part of the process of creating the New Zealand identity. Next enjoy a short hike in Waipoua forest seeing the Kauri giants and hearing local stories. Learn of the rich bird life and fauna that inhabit the forest and the deep spiritual respect that the Maori hold for the area. Overnight in Paihia, where dinner is at your leisure. Accommodation: Copthorne Hotel (B)

### **Tuesday 31 December 2019                      Paihia**

Paihia sits on a bay in the Bay of Islands and was one of the first towns settled by European explorers. Close by is Waitangi where the founding document of New Zealand, the Treaty of Waitangi, was signed in 1840. We will tour the grounds and museum to learn of the significance of the treaty. The afternoon is free for you to enjoy this beautiful place. There are plenty of activities for you to choose from ranging from taking a boat ride to the outer Islands, learning to paddle a Waka, visiting historical Russell or chilling by the sea, the choice is yours. Tonight, a fabulous dinner to bring in the New Year. Accommodation: Copthorne Hotel (B,HD)



### **Wednesday 1 January 2020                      Pahia to Auckland via Tutukaka**



We bus to Tutukaka where we join our perfect day cruise for an active day snorkeling, kayaking or paddle boarding around the Poor Knights Islands. Poor Knights Islands is a total Marine Reserve and Nature Reserve - and pending World Heritage Site. The 11 million-year-old Islands' volcanic origins provide myriad spectacular drop offs, walls, caves, arches and tunnels. Concluding the day, we return to Auckland where we will have a group dinner at the hotel. Accommodation: Mercure Hotel (B,L,D)

**Thursday 2 January 2021****Auckland to Rotorua**

Driving through the rich farmland of the Waikato, we visit a working sheep and beef farm to learn about New Zealand farming and the environmental issues involved. We will enjoy a farm style lunch, in the farmer's woolshed, where the farmer will join us for discussion and questions. Next stop, New Zealand's favorite fantasy movie set: Hobbiton. Whether you are a fan of the movies or not, you will admire the craft and creativity that have resulted in this fictional Hobbit village in the middle of a dairy farm. Travel concludes at Rotorua, the volcanic heart of the North Island, a place where both physical and Maori cultural forces are strong. Novotel Rotorua (B,L)

**Friday 3 January 2020****Rotorua**

In the morning we have a two-hour bike ride through the beautiful Redwood forest. Next, we travel to the Government Gardens and then visit Kiwi Encounter, a working kiwi nursery and hatchery and learn the stages that a kiwi chick goes through before being released into the wild. Later in the afternoon we visit Te Puia Maori Arts and Crafts center where we learn about the unusual features of this geothermal city. The hot rocks, located close to the surface, heat ground water which boils to the surface as hot springs; the water rises as steam it bursts out of the ground as tall fountains called geysers. After witnessing a Maori welcome, seeing songs, dances, and the famous Haka, we then enjoy a traditional Maori Hangi, dinner which is cooked in an earth oven. Novotel Rotorua (B,D)

**Saturday 4 January 2020****Rotorua to Wellington**

Traveling south we stop to view the spectacular Huka Falls where the power of the water pushes its way through the gorge. We will stop in Taupo, a vibrant town on a lake created in the caldera which resulted from a super volcanic eruption over 26 million years ago. Continuing south we see the magnificent mountains Ruapehu, Tongariro and Ngauruhoe - all active volcanoes sitting in the middle of New Zealand's first national park: Tongariro National Park. Accommodation: Novotel Wellington (B,L)

**Sunday 5 January 2020****Wellington**

Our morning starts off with the Museum of New Zealand: Te Papa. This museum is an in-depth informative experience of what Aotearoa or New Zealand is all about from its geological origin to its native species, as well as its human history. Next up we have an electric bike tour of Wellington. We will leisurely ride around the bays and easily cruise up Mount Victoria for a great lookout over Wellington. Enjoy some free time before taking the cable car to the top of Kelburn Hill where we take in the views of the harbor before travelling onto Zealandia, the world's first fully fenced urban eco-sanctuary.

Over 18 species of native wildlife have been reintroduced, six of which were previously absent from mainland New Zealand for over 100 years. We tour the sanctuary at twilight to experience the park in the day and night. Accommodation: Novotel Wellington (B,D)

**Monday 6 January 2020****Wellington – Christchurch**

Today is a day of travel and seeing New Zealand by bus, boat and train. In the morning we take the Interislander Ferry for a three-hour trip across the Cook Strait and through the beautiful Marlborough Sounds arriving disembarking at Picton. We then board the Coastal Pacific train journeying southward along the Pacific Ocean, where the roaring sea meets the enormous bush-clad mountains. After settling into our Christchurch hotel in the early evening, we will enjoy dinner together. Accommodation Distinction Hotel (B,D)

**Tuesday 7 January 2020****Christchurch – Dunedin**

A morning walking tour of the city will allow us to see how the area has evolved after the devastating earthquake of 2011. Following the tour you will have some time free time to explore and then we continue south to Dunedin (Edinburgh of the South), stopping to view the Moeraki boulders. Tonight we visit Larnach Castle, touring the beautiful gardens and enjoying dinner in the castle itself. Accommodation: Southern Cross Hotel (B)

**Wednesday 8 January 2020****Dunedin**

Today is free for you to explore this picturesque city. There are many optional activities from which to choose ranging from a harbor cruise to the albatross colony, hike to see the home of the penguins, visit the Speights Brewery for a tour and taste or take the Taieri Gorge train trip through Dunedin, across the Taieri plains, into the gorge. The evening is free for you to enjoy and explore many of the cafes and restaurants near the hotel. Accommodation: Southern Cross Hotel (B)

**Thursday 9 January 2020****Dunedin – Stewart Island**

Starting in the morning, we drive along the south coast into The Catlins, an area of great contrasts and natural beauty with an abundance of wildlife. From magnificent coastal cliffs and headlands, long sweeping beaches, coves and sandy bays; to extensive temperate rainforests, waterfalls and rolling farmland, The Catlins is a fascinating, rugged place “off the beaten track.” From the city of Bluff we take a ferry to Stewart Island, the third largest island of New Zealand. Our local guide will introduce the island to us and help us understand the conservation efforts of the local residents. This evening we go on a bush walk to find a kiwi. Accommodation: South Sea Hotel (B,D)

**Friday 10 January 2020****Stewart Island - Milford Sound**

After leaving Stewart Island and taking the ferry back to Bluff, we travel north, stopping at Te Anau for lunch. From here our drive takes us deep into the wilderness of Fiordland National Park. We pass through the ‘Homer Tunnel’ before emerging into the ‘Sound.’ We join the Milford Cruise Boat for an overnight journey through the Milford Sound (Fjord). It is likely that dolphins will keep us company with seals glancing at us as we travel by. After dropping anchor in Harrison’s Cove, we have a choice of taking a kayak tour of the area or joining one of the nature guides on a hike to learn more about the flora and fauna of the area and maybe spot some penguins. (B,D)



### **Saturday 11 January 2020 Milford Sound – Queenstown**

We retrace our steps to Te Anau and then drive on to Queenstown. We will stop for a guided wine tour and tasting at Gibbston Winery, one of the early wineries in the valley. Later we stop to watch those brave enough to do the AJ Hackett bungy jump off the Kawarau Bridge before arriving at our hotel. Dinner is at your leisure at one of Queenstown's many pubs, cafés or restaurants. Accommodation: Scenic Suite (B,L)

### **Sunday 12 January 2020**

### **Queenstown**



Today is a free day to explore Queenstown at your own pace, there are jetboat rides, wine tours, 4WD trips to view the sites from Lord of the Rings or the beautiful Queenstown gardens. In the evening, we take a gondola to the top of 'Bobs Peak' to take in the fantastic views over the Remarkable Mountain range, Lake Wakatipu, and Queenstown before enjoying a fantastic buffet dinner. Accommodation: Scenic Suite (B,HD)

### **Saturday 13 January 2020 Queenstown - Home**

This morning we transfer to the Queenstown airport to catch a domestic flight back to Auckland to connect with your international flight back to the United States. **We will head to the airport at approximately at 8:15 a.m. Please book your return flight to depart after 9:30 a.m.** (B)

#### **Additional Notes:**

Although not anticipated, itinerary can be subject to change.

If you wish to arrive earlier or leave later, we can help book additional nights at the hotel we are staying at.

Meals: Breakfast comprises of cereals, fruit, toast, selection of cooked dishes (such as eggs/bacon) plus tea/coffee. Dinner is normally two courses plus tea, water, coffee.

B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner, HD=highlight dinner (beer, wine and pop are provided)