Walking New Zealand - North to South Island Explorer

Trip Code: TNZ

Version:

WALK & TREK	GUIDED GROUP	5 MODERATE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Stay at the remote Rex Simpson Hut, Lake Tekapo, for world-class star-gazing
- Trek beneath Mt Cook, and on the Abel Tasman and Routeburn Tracks
- Visit Rotorua and trek the Tongariro Crossing, New Zealand's best one day walk

- Sail in the Abel Tasman, explore the Marlborough Sounds and cruise on Milford Sounds

AT A GLANCE

- 14 days walking
- Max. altitude - 2000m
- Join at Auckland, End in Christchurch

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

New Zealand is an outdoor lover's paradise with volcanoes, mountains, beautiful coastline, forest, beaches and huge lakes to enjoy, in this 3 week holiday we have attempted to include all the hiking highlights of this wonderful and welcoming country and to get 'off the beaten track' as much as possible. To the Maori, New Zealand is Aotearoa, Land of the Long White Cloud and the contrasting North and South Islands have become a patchwork of Maori, European, Asian and Pacific Island history. With only 4 million inhabitants in a country the size of the UK, there's s a lot of fresh air and open space to explore! Starting in Auckland on the North Island, we transfer to volcanic Rotorua and hike the Tongariro Alpine Crossing 'the best 1-day hike in New Zealand'. Then taking a ferry across the Cook Strait from Wellington to the South Island, we enter the famous Marlborough Sounds where we enjoy a trek on the Queen Charlotte track (with 2 night stay in a stunningly located ecolodge), a sailing boat journey, and hike part of the stunning Abel Tasman Coastal Track. Heading down the West Coast, we visit the Pancake Rocks at Punakaiki and hike up to the Franz Josef Glacier. Looping inland via Lake Wanaka, we reach the gateway to the amazing Fiordland at Te Anau. Here we make a scenic hike on the Routeburn Track and take a cruise on Milford Sound. Making our way north towards Christchurch, our final walks are to the Mueller Hut below Mount Cook and then a final 2 day hike where we will overnight at Rex Simpson hut near Lake Tekapo, which we will book out exclusively. Lake Tekapo has been declared an International Dark Sky Reserve and as we enjoy star-gazing from the hut, we can reflect on our unforgettable visit to this amazing country, far away in the South Pacific.

Is this holiday for you?

This holiday is ideal for active travellers who enjoy exploring a country on foot via its best hikes. The walks we have chosen (particularly our 2-day hike in Lake Tekapo, and our hikes to the summits of Mt Roy and Mt Erika) are designed to take you just that little bit further than your average tour and off the beaten track where possible. There's a great mix of short rambles, unmissable day walks and 2-day hikes, ranging from 2 to 7 hrs in duration. Many of these can be considered optional. Our toughest walk will be the Tongariro Crossing where we will be walking for around 7hrs with around 1000m of ascent and descent. To explore both the North and South Islands will require us to cover some long distances, however our longest drive will still only be around 4hrs and we travel in a comfortable bus throughout. For the night at the Rex Simpson Hut you will not have access to your main baggage and will be required to carry your overnight essentials with you (bedding is provided). This will mean carrying a slightly heavier rucksack on these days. The itinerary has also been designed to allow us to take the opportunity to stop off and stretch our legs as often as possible. Including two driver guides means there are no unnecessary rest

days, so we can be on the move and include as much as possible. There are still a couple of days with a minimal amount of walking and on these days you have the option to take it easy, this is a holiday after all!

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- 2 Professional and qualified Tour Leader/Drivers
- A single timed transfer from airport to hotel in Auckland on Day 1
- A single timed transfer to the airport in Christchurch on Day 19
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- All transport required by the itinerary
- All activities/excursions/entrance fees mentioned except where specified as 'optional' National Park entrance fees

What's not Included

- Travel Insurance
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Tips
- Miscellaneous personal expenditure - drinks and souvenirs etc

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the group hotel in Auckland.

A single transfer from Auckland Airport to the hotel in Auckland is included on Day 1. This transfer will usually be timed to meet the Emirates flight arriving in the late morning.

Anyone may join the group transfers by prior arrangement. Travelling as a group or on public transport saves energy. If your flight schedule does not fit with this timed transfer, taxis are available outside the airport at all times or you can pre-book a transfer with a shuttle bus service such as Super Shuttle (www.supershuttle.co.nz/).

On last day of the holiday (Day 19) there will be a single timed transfer to Christchurch Airport from the group hotel in Tekapo. This transfer is timed to arrive at the airport in time for the check-in of the early evening Emirates flight. Those departing later than this can also take advantage of this transfer. If your flights depart earlier than this, please be aware it is a journey of approximately 3 hours from Tekapo to Christchurch and the taxi fare is approximately 400 - 600 NZ dollars.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Food & Water

Water from the taps is perfectly drinkable on this holiday - please use this to fill your personal bottles for your daily activities. We do not encourage the purchase of single-use plastic bottles.

Evening meal and lunches are generally not included, with the exception of a traditionally prepared, Maori-style evening meal on Day 2, lunch on board the boat on Day 8, and dinner on Day 17 and lunch on Day 18 - both of which will be prepared by your Tour Leader at the Rex Simpson hut.

Where there is access to a wide choice of restaurants, cafes and /or menu choices to suit all budgets/ appetites, it makes sense to leave the choice to you. Your Tour Leader will also be able to make recommendations and suggestions for places where the group can eat together if you would like.

New Zealand has a variety of well-stocked supermarkets, bakeries and cafes where items for lunch can be purchased.

Accommodation

We will us a good standard of accommodation throughout. Accommodation styles will vary from high end city hotels to stunningly located ecolodges, to more simple rural motel style hotels, but each will be comfortable and well located. With the exception of the night at the Rex Simpson Hut all accommodation will be twin-share. If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex. With the exception of the Rex Simpson Hut all rooms will be en suite.

The Rex Simpson Hut it a traditional New Zealand back-country hut, which will be booked out exclusively for our stay. Here accommodation will be in mixed bunked rooms with shared bathrooms. Sleeping bags and sheet-liners will be provided. There are no showers, but warm water and a basin can be provided for washing or you can find a private spot at a nearby stream. The toilet is a traditional longdrop loo with a view! The hut is fully equipped with pot belly stove, firewood, gas and solar lighting. Sleeping bags, sheet-liners, pillows and mattresses are provided. Though the accommodation here will be more basic, the unique experience of spending the night in the middle of a designated dark sky reserve will more than make up for this.

Single rooms are available on some nights for a supplementary cost. If you are planning on extending your holiday additional nights at the group hotel are also available on request.

Group Leader & Support Staff

Each group will be accompanied by 2 professional and qualified tour leaders, who will also share responsibility for driving the support vehicle. The walks on Days 6 and 8 will be led by local tour guides. This is to ensure that our Tour Leaders can be ensured of the right amount of rest time within such a busy itinerary.

Spending Money

A total of £650 should cover the cost of your miscellaneous expenses, including none included meals. You should take at least some of your travel money in the form of cash and exchange this on arrival in Auckland. It is not necessary to obtain New Zealand dollars prior to departure. It is possible to withdraw cash from ATM's at towns throughout the trip and credit and debit cards can be widely used. If you are intending to buy expensive souvenirs, you should budget accordingly (plastic cards can be useful in this respect). Also, if you expect to buy considerable quantities of soft drinks or beer, you should make an allowance for this.

Guidance on Tipping

Tipping is not expected in New Zealand, although if your guide has done a good job, you may feel it is appropriate to reward him or her with a tip or a gift. Also, for good service in restaurants it is not uncommon to leave a tip of around 10%.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage and a daypack. Luggage with wheels is useful for this holiday. For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline. For the night at the Rex Simpson Hut you will not have access to your main baggage. You will need to carry your overnight essentials with you in your rucksack.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the ‘Dates and Prices’ table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

From 1 October 2019, travellers must have an NZeTA (New Zealand Travel Authority) to travel to New Zealand. From July 2019 you can request your NZeTA via the Immigration New Zealand mobile app or the Immigration New Zealand website (www.immigration.govt.nz/nzeta). The app is fast, easy to use, and the most affordable option. The cost of the ETA is NZD$9 for requests made via the mobile app and NZD$12 for requests made via the Immigration NZ website. You will be asked to pay your International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy (IVL) of NZD$35 (Aug 2019) at the same time. ETA requests will take between 5-10 minutes to complete. Once issued, an ETA is valid for up to two years and can be used for multiple visits to NZ.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.

Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

Severe Allergies:

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

Currency

The unit of currency in New Zealand is the New Zealand Dollar.

Preparing for your Holiday

Getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. You should be aerobically fit and comfortable with walking for up to 7 hours. Hill walking is the best training, but running, cycling and swimming are also good for developing cardiovascular fitness and stamina.

Climate

We run our New Zealand trekking trips during the Southern Hemisphere spring and summer period of November through to March. At this time of year, we can expect temperatures of between 20°C and 25°C during the day, falling to between 10°C and 15°C at night. Surrounded by warm oceans, New Zealand has a maritime climate and does experience rainfall throughout the year. In the South Island, the West Coast receives far more rain than the east of the island, which lies in the rain shadow of the mountains.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- Lonely Planet. New Zealand.
- Fodor's Exploring. New Zealand.
- The Rough Guide to New Zealand.

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our Travel Insurance page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

The following checklist should help you with your packing. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum.

Hiking boots and poles are likely to be checked for cleanliness by customs on arrival in New Zealand. This is to protect against any contaminants that might cause harm to New Zealand's primary industries. We would advise that these items are cleaned before packing.

You must bring the following items:

- Hiking boots
- Training shoes
- Socks
- Trekking trousers
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Underwear
- Baselayer shirts (1 short sleeve, 1 long sleeve)

- T-shirts and/or casual shirts
- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Warm fleece gloves or mittens
- Warm hat
- Sunhat
- Sunglasses
- Daypack 30 litres
- Headtorch and batteries
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Water bottles 1 litre (x2) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Washbag and toiletries
- Antibacterial hand wash
- Small padlock (to lock luggage)

The following items are optional:

- Gaiters
- Spare laces
- Shorts
- Thermal baselayer - leggings

- Swimwear
- Trekking poles
- Insect repellant - (DEET)
- Camera
- Pen-knife (note: always pack sharp objects in hold baggage)
- Repair kit - (eg. needle, thread, duct tape)
- A basic medical kit will accompany each trek. We recommend that you bring your own personal first aid kit consisting of the following: Antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Immodium), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, Insect repellent (DEET), antihistamine cream and tablets, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Land Only Information

LAND ONLY dates and prices are for joining in Auckland. A single timed transfer from Auckland Airport to the group hotel is provided. The holiday ends at Lake Tekapo. A single timed transfer from Lake Tekapo to Christchurch Airport is provided.

Flight Inclusive Information

Limited seats are available at the advertised flight price, please book as early as you can. If we are unable to secure seats at the price shown, or you have requested regional departures and/or upgrades, we will provide you with an alternative quote. It is likely that flight payment will be in advance of your final holiday balance. Booking a flight inclusive package means you will benefit from full financial protection, eases your holiday planning, and leaves us to deal with airlines and schedule changes. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

Regional departures and/or alternative carriers are available on request.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Auckland airport. Outbound flights will depart the UK early evening, arriving late morning 2 days later (day 1 of the itinerary). Return flights will depart Christchurch airport in the early evening of the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK in the morning of the following day.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

To allow you to make the most of every second of your time in New Zealand we've not only kept our group sizes small, we've also included two expert driver/guides to accompany each group. This mean we can include walks and activities on every day and it also ensures that you will be incredibly well looked after every step of the way.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 11/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change