

# North Island Wonders: From Auckland to Wellington

This itinerary is *incredibly* tentative. New Zealand offers such a great array of things to do/see. Once the group is formed, I'll form a more specific plan of what to do/see based on the preferences of the group.

This itinerary is just a taste of what your time in New Zealand could look like.

## October 11–20, 2026

Spend your days exploring the diverse landscapes and cultural gems of New Zealand's North Island. From Auckland's harbors to Rotorua's geothermal wonders, Taupo's lakeside charm, Hobbiton's cinematic magic, and Wellington's coastal energy—this small-group adventure blends natural beauty with local flavor. Hobbiton is included in the trip cost. All other activities are optional.

## October 11–12 – Travel Days

Fly from the U.S. to Auckland, New Zealand, crossing the international date line.

## October 13 – Arrival in Auckland

Arrive in Auckland, a vibrant harbor city. Enjoy a relaxed afternoon exploring the Viaduct Harbour, browsing local shops, or strolling up to the Auckland Domain and Wintergardens.

### Overnight in Auckland

#### *Optional Activities:*

- Visit Auckland War Memorial Museum
- Take a sunset harbor cruise
- Head to the top of Sky Tower for panoramic view

## October 14 – Drive to Rotorua

Depart for the geothermal hub of Rotorua, stopping along the way to stretch your legs or visit local markets. Once in town, enjoy the bubbling mud pools, mineral springs, and Māori culture.

### Overnight in Rotorua

#### *Optional Activities:*

- Polynesian Spa soak
- Te Pā Tū Māori cultural experience
- Visit Te Puia geothermal park and carving school

## October 15 – Explore Rotorua

Spend another day immersed in Rotorua's unique landscape and culture. Take a forest walk,

ride a gondola for panoramic views, or venture into the redwoods.

### **Overnight in Rotorua**

#### *Optional Activities:*

- Skyline Gondola + Luge
- Redwoods Treewalk
- Ziplining adventure

### **October 16 – Hobbiton + Taupo**

Depart Rotorua and head to Hobbiton, the world-famous movie set nestled in the green hills of Matamata. After a guided tour (included in the trip cost), continue to Taupo, a lakeside town at the heart of the island.

### **Overnight in Taupo**

### **October 17 – Explore Taupo**

Take in the natural wonders around Lake Taupo—New Zealand's largest lake. Visit Huka Falls, enjoy lakeside trails, or opt for a scenic cruise or adrenaline-pumping activity.

### **Overnight in Taupo**

#### *Optional Activities:*

- Jetboat to Huka Falls
- Sail to the Māori Rock Carvings
- Visit the Craters of the Moon geothermal walk

### **October 18 – Drive to Wellington**

Enjoy a scenic drive down through the heart of the North Island toward Wellington, New Zealand's compact and creative capital city. Settle in and explore the vibrant waterfront and local eateries.

### **Overnight in Wellington**

### **October 19 – Discover Wellington**

Spend the day exploring Wellington, from its harborside walkways to the national museum and charming neighborhoods.

### **Overnight in Wellington**

#### *Optional Activities:*

- Ride the iconic red cable car
- Visit Te Papa Tongarewa (New Zealand's National Museum)
- Walk the Wellington Waterfront or Mount Victoria Lookout

### **October 20 – Departure Day**

Transfer to Wellington Airport for your return flight home.