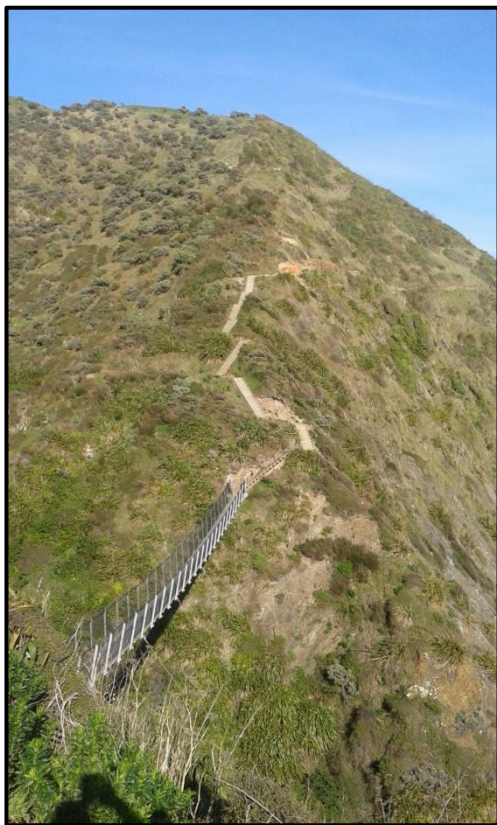


NORTH ISLAND WALKING TOUR

A unique small-group tour for leisure walkers

wildside
for travel less ordinary
09-24 March 2019



NEW ZEALAND NORTH ISLAND WALKING TOUR – 2018

INTRODUCTION

This tour information package details a uniquely designed, extended-length nature/walking tour arranged and escorted by Wildside Travel. This is a 16 day North Island tour starting Auckland and finishing in Wellington. The trip will be a comfortable sized group tour with a maximum 12 tour members – travelling and exploring from the comfort of a luxury mini-bus.

In keeping with tradition, this nature/walking tour includes collections of easy to moderate forest, coastal, lake and alpine trail walks, in a wide range of areas throughout the North Island. The tour is interspaced with exciting activities iconic to the areas plus time to relax and explore some of the more interesting townships and regions we drive through. The itinerary includes many two and three night stays in the same place – so tour members can really settle in and enjoy their surroundings.

WILDSIDE: TOUR HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

Wildside Travel is owned and operated by Andrea Livingston, who has worked in the Travel Industry since 1996 with the last 15 years in the Adventure Travel arena. Andrea has escorted over 37 tours, from South and Central America, Canada, India and Vietnam and more recently the South Pacific Islands of Niue, Samoa and Rarotonga all of which are Wildside Travel creations.

The company was founded in 2006 as a boredom-buster, for Andrea to write and escort her own itineraries. Wildside is synonymous with the development of Cycle touring in Samoa – offering the very first and very successful 15 days leisure tours over a four year period. Cycling is now a ‘must-do’ activity for visitors to Samoa. In 2010 Andrea went solo and became a Travel Broker with her own unique brand and since then has branched out into extended-length tours in the Southern hemisphere and now North America. Company policy is to offer opportunities and experiences ‘less ordinary’ to active, open age, inclusive, like minded, good humoured groups ☺

TOUR INFORMATION

NZ NORTH ISLAND

This itinerary has huge popularity with travellers to New Zealand, spending 16 days exploring a broad range of the Islands most iconic features from pristine waterways, wild untamed beaches, forested lakes, river trails, mountains, gardens and walk ways. The tour is scheduled to coincide with the autumn colours so tour members can enjoy beautiful settled weather and moderate temperatures at a quieter time of the year during our explorations.

Features include: Bethells Beach, Soljans Estate Winery, Rangitoto Island, Maungakiekie / One Tree Hill, Miranda Hot Springs, Karangahake Gorge, Homunga Track-Oraokawa Bay, Mt Maunganui, Maungakawa/ Sanitorium Hill, Hamilton Gardens, Waikato River Orakei Korako ‘The Hidden Valley’, Te Waihou Walkway, Maungatautari Ecological Sanctuary, Waikato River Trail, Hobbiton, Otorohanga Kiwi House, Waitomo Caves, Mangapohue Natural Bridge, Marakopa Falls, Forgotten World Highway Te Rewa Rewa Bridge, Lake Matamahoe, Wanganui River ‘Bridge to Nowhere’, Peka Peka Beach, Paekakariki Escarpment Walk, Skyline Walkway.

TRAVELLING WITH US

TOUR CONTENT

The content of our nature/walking tour is extensive. A well-balanced mix of easy to moderate nature walks within groomed and formed trails in a diverse range of settings. These are complemented with visits to a collection of cultural and historical sites, interpretive centres, gardens and museums allowing us exploration of many fascinating off-the-beaten-track spots. Expect each day to throw up new surprises!

VALUE FOR MONEY

With so many variations of forest, lake, river and coast trail experiences packed into one itinerary we strive to offer an exciting programme balanced with relaxed and well-appointed high quality motels and a comfortable luxury minibus. We include all breakfasts, no lunches and some of dinners over the length of the tour. Our tour price represents an incredible all-inclusive value that would be hard to beat. We aim to deliver that once-in-a-lifetime travelling experience.

TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

Much time and effort has gone into researching and selecting not only good quality accommodation for our tour, but well located for our tour activities, appropriate to our style, and delivering the comfort we seek at the end of our day. We often stay in places less visited by mainstream tourism, which further adds to the rich and often unique memories tour members return home with.

TOUR GROUP SIZE

You will have one Tour Leader and experienced local driver for the North Island tour, maximum 12 passengers which enables a smaller group to journey and explore at a relaxed and leisurely pace suitable for different abilities ensuring all tour members receive maximum enjoyment. We spend several nights in feature areas so we are not continually on the move and forever packing and unpacking. This also allows us to cater more to the individual desires of tour members who may wish to complement walking with a passion for photography, flora and fauna, or perhaps history and culture.

FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE AND NO WORK ROSTERS

We nurture a warm, friendly and inclusive atmosphere while on tour. We all share the many wonderful walks, the exploring of amazing places and the sharing of exiting new experiences while on tour. We endeavour to provide some relaxing social time each evening so members can share their days experiences.



ITINERARY: NZ NORTH ISLAND WALKING TOUR

Saturday 09 March – Sunday 24 March 2019

Sat 09 Mar Auckland coast to coast

Welcome to Auckland! Tour participants will be picked up from downtown Auckland at 8am or the airport at 9am. From the airport we drive to the leafy West Auckland suburb of Titirangi for a coffee break and to pick up a picnic lunch, before continuing on to the West Coast. Bethells Beach has been used as a scenic backdrop in many movies and music videos and on our beach, lake and bush walk you'll see just why this area captivates locals and film-makers. We continue on to Soljans Estate Winery located in Kumeu Wine Country for lunch, followed by a wine tour and tasting. A lovely setting to get to know your fellow travellers. Check in to our downtown hotel late afternoon and in the evening we'll dine in one of the many waterfront eateries.

Walking: approx 4km

Sun 10 Mar Auckland - Miranda

Up early for the first sailing across to Rangitoto Island, New Zealand's youngest volcano at just 600 years old. We fill in the morning with a steady climb on a well-maintained track past rugged lava scree and through the world's largest pohutukawa forest to the peak at 259 metres above sea level. At the top we'll be rewarded with spectacular views of the Hauraki Gulf and Auckland.

Midday sailing back to Auckland where we're picked up and driven to Maungakiekie / One Tree Hill. This extinct volcano is thought to have erupted more than 28,500 years ago and was the largest and most important Māori pā in pre-European times. One Tree Hill Domain and Cornwall Park offer 220 hectares of public green space in the city and after lunch we will spend some time exploring the area. Our late afternoon drive is along a scenic coastal drive to Miranda natural Hot Springs where we overnight. A soak before sundowners and a Wildside BBQ.

Walking: approx 4 + 2 kms

Mon 11 Mar Miranda – Waihi Beach

Today we visit Karangahake Gorge at the base of the Coromandel Range. Our walk will take us deep in to the gorge following the old railway line through tunnels, over bridges, past mining remains, arriving to the Falls Café for an early lunch. In the afternoon we call into the small gold mining town of Waihi for a stroll down the main street to the Martha open pit mine and museum for a fascinating look at the history of mining in the area. From nearby Waihi town we will walk the Homunga track via Orokawa Bay to Waihi Beach. This is an undulating track where we will mostly be walking in bush to the tune of the cicadas summer anthem, chortling tuis and the ocean crashing on to the coast. Sundowners and fish'n'chips on the beach tonight.

Walking: approx 3 + 7 kms

Tue 12 Mar Waihi Beach – Mt Maunganui – Cambridge

A short drive through to The Mount this morning where walks at either the Mt Maunganui Base or Summit Track. Both options take around an hour to complete however the Summit does require a reasonable amount of exertion but it's worth it for the amazing views! A beach café lunch follows. This afternoon's drive will take us over the Kaimai Ranges to the Waikato. Our base for the next three days is the pretty town of Cambridge, known for its trees and its champions. We'll drive straight to Maungakawa/Sanitorium Hill for an aerial orientation of the area and a lovely little bush walk before checking in to our accommodation.

Walking: approx. 4 + 2 km

Wed 13 Mar Cambridge – Hamilton Gardens

We start the day with a local walk along river trails, well-manicured streets and the centre of town. A visit will also be made to NZ's home of cycling - the \$28.5 million Avantidrome which features a world class 250m velodrome track and provides facilities for cycling elite.

The afternoon will be spent rambling through the popular Hamilton Gardens. The Gardens are internationally renowned and tell the story of gardens through different civilisations and time. From the Gardens we will continue strolling along the Waikato River where our driver will meet us.

Optional: Twilight kayak adventure to a glow worm canyon. No kayaking experience required, just a sense of adventure for which you will be rewarded with an unforgettable evening.

Walking: approx. 7 + 3km

Thu 14 Mar Cambridge – Orakei Korako – Tirau – Cambridge

This morning we drive south to another part of the Waikato River where we board a jet boat for a thrilling ride to the “The Squeeze” for a refreshing dip in a mystical natural hot spring waterfall followed by a visit to an active geothermal area. Orakei Korako aka “The Hidden Valley” is NZ’s largest geothermal area with more than 250 hot springs and geysers. This afternoon we will walk the picturesque Te Waihou Walkway through farmland to the internationally acclaimed Blue Spring. The water here is so pure it supplies around 70% of NZ’s bottled water. Enroute back to Cambridge, we’ll stop at the unique little town of Tirau for some snacks and free time to explore the shops.

Walking: approx. 2 + 4 kms

Fri 15 Mar Cambridge – Arapuni – Hobbiton – Cambridge

A short drive from Cambridge, is the Maungatautari Ecological Sanctuary where we will spend an interesting few hours on a guided walk through the forest. Surrounded by the world’s longest pest-proof fence, this ancient forest offers a sanctuary for populations of many of New Zealand’s most endangered species – from birds to bats, frogs to reptiles, tuatara to giant weta. Lunch is at a little country café before walking some of the Waikato River Trail through wetlands, across farms and along the river. Later this afternoon, even if you’re not a ‘Lord of the Rings’ fan, a visit to Hobbiton is a truly amazing experience. Stroll through the lush pastures of “The Shire” on a guided movie-set tour, past Hobbit Holes, the Mill and on to the world-famous Green Dragon Inn for a well-earned beverage.

Walking: approx. 5 + 6 + 2 kms

Sat 16 Mar Cambridge – Otorohanga – Waitomo – Taumaranui

First stop this morning is the Otorohanga Kiwi House where there will be some free time to wander through the large free-flight dome aviary, before heading inside to see reptiles such as the unique tuatara which pre-dates dinosaurs. You can view active kiwi including the rare Great Spotted Kiwi, Little Spotted Kiwi and Brown Kiwi all on display in a night time setting. We will be there for feeding time and an opportunity to learn more about Kiwi from their keepers. A short drive south brings us to Waitomo where we will walk the Waitomo Walkway – an easy walk traversing a classic limestone landscape through forest and open farmland. In the afternoon we visit the world renowned Waitomo Glowworm Caves. The glowworm, *Arachnocampa luminosa*, is unique to New Zealand and a local guide will take us deep into the cave where we will see thousands of these tiny creatures radiate their unmistakable luminescent light. Mid-afternoon we will visit Mangapohue Natural Bridge for a short scenic walk along a boardwalk through an impressive limestone gorge. Onward to Marakopa Falls for a 10 minute walk through tawa and nikau forest to the viewing platform to see the Marakopa River cascading over the rock. The Falls are often described as the most beautiful in the country. Our final stop for the day is the small King Country town of Taumaranui where we overnight.

Walking: approx. 5km

Sun 17 Mar Taumaranui – Tokorima – Whangamomona – New Plymouth

Early this morning we change our mode of transportation for self-drive Rail Carts (2 people per cart) and explore a forgotten world. Through the northern most section of an abandoned railway line cutting through rugged farmland, across bridges and through hand-dug tunnels, some of them up to 1.5km long. We arrive in Tokorima around midday and meet up with our vehicle for a scenic drive along the Forgotten World Highway to the “Republic of Whangamomona”. A Late lunch at one of NZ’s remotest country pubs before driving to the New Plymouth and checking in to our accommodation.

Optional (subject to ticket availability): **The WOMAD Festival**

WOMAD (World of Music, Arts and Dance) is an international festival celebrated in over 30 countries bringing together artists from all over the globe. This will be the last night of the 3-day festival and the artists for 2018 are yet to be announced, but are sure to be amazing.

Mon 18 Mar New Plymouth

After breakfast, we drive to Bell Block and set off for a walk along the award-winning Coastal Walkway. A flat easy walk with picturesque views, we hug the coastline walking a paved path between farmland and pounding waves crossing the

dramatic Te Rewa Rewa bridge. Fingers crossed for a clear day as the way this Bridge frames Mt Taranaki is an incredible sight. In the afternoon we drive to Lake Matamahoe. The lake is famous for its reflection of Mt Taranaki and there is a lovely undulating loop walk of the lake through forest and bush. We then head in to the city for some free time. You might like to visit the contemporary art museum and home to the collection of modernist filmmaker and kinetic artist Len Lye, or Puke Ariki with its heritage and art collections.

Walking: approx. 6 + 6 km

Tue 19 Mar New Plymouth – Opunake – Wanganui

Leaving New Plymouth we head south along the coast to the popular surf town of Opunake. Our morning walk takes us around a beautiful lake, across cliffs and along the beach enjoying views of Te Namu Pa, Mt Taranaki and the rugged coastline. After lunch in Opunake, we'll continue driving along the Surf Highway to Wanganui, stopping enroute for a cuppa at Patea – home of the famous Patea Maori Club, whose 80s hit *Poi-E* is still one of the country's favourite songs.

Walking: approx. 7 km

Wed 20 Mar Wanganui – Jerusalem – Bridge to Nowhere – Wanganui

We head away early this morning for a scenic drive to the peaceful village of Jerusalem, the resting place of well-known poet James K Baxter. After a stroll around the gardens of the Sisters of Compassionate Convent we continue our scenic rural drive to Pipiriki. From here we board a jet boat for an exhilarating ride up the Wanganui River through pristine bush and deep gorges. See the world famous Drop Scene, the Dress Circle and the ancient pegs used by the river boat crew to help them negotiate these waters over 100 years ago. On arrival at Mangapurua Landing we have an easy 40 minute bush walk to the historic "Bridge to Nowhere". After a picnic lunch, we walk back to the landing to meet the jet boat for more thrills on our journey back to Pipiriki where our vehicle awaits us for our return to Wanganui.

Walking: 6km

Thu 21Mar Wanganui – Otaki – Waikanae – Raumati

We continue travelling south stopping at the outlet shopping town of Otaki for a coffee break before continuing on to Peka Peka beach. We will walk along the seashore to Waikanae. This is a lovely stretch of beach littered with driftwood and unspoilt sand dunes with fabulous views of Kapiti Island. Lunch in a beach café before driving to Southward Car Museum. Here you can see the most comprehensive privately owned collection of veteran and vintage cars in the southern hemisphere including Marlene Dietrich's Cadillac, a 1915 Stutz Racer, a 1938 Maybach, a gull winged Mercedes Benz, the Chicago Gangsters armour plated limo and all sorts of other treasures. It's a short drive to our accommodation at Raumati Beach.

Walking: approx. 5 km

Fri 22 Mar Raumati - Kapiti Coast - Raumati

This morning's walk is optional as it's not for the faint-hearted as we will be reaching some heights with steep drops. The Paekakariki Escarpment walk will take us through farmland, bush, across two swing bridges and up and down some steep steps. This is one of the newest sections of the Te Araroa walkway and offers awesome views of the ocean, Kapiti and the South Island. We end in Pukerua Bay and drive back to our accommodation for a relaxing afternoon. Late afternoon there will be a walk along the beautiful sand dune tracks of Queen Elizabeth Regional Park for sunset drinks on the beach.

Walking: approx. 10 km

Sat 23 Mar Raumati – Wellington

We end our tour with a full day on the Skyline Walkway across the ridge tops of Wellington following the Outer Green Belt from Johnston Hill, Kilmister Tops, the Crows Nest, Mount Kaukau and ending in the bush-clad suburb of Karori. Along the way we will indulge in breathtaking rural, city and coastal views. Check in to our hotel along the city waterfront and enjoy a farewell dinner together in a special setting.

Walking: approx. 12 kms

Sun 24 Mar Wellington

The tour ends after breakfast. Morning transfer to Wellington airport if required.



Terms & Conditions: NZ NORTH ISLAND TOUR

NZ SOUTH ISLAND: Departs Auckland Saturday 09 March 2019

TOUR PRICE: \$4,490 per person

\$1,150 Single Supplement

TOUR COST INCLUDES

- 15 nights accommodation in good quality hotels and motels
- All breakfasts, no Lunches, some dinners.
- Sundowner drinks & BBQ dinner as specified
- Tour leader / walking guide
- Transportation in modern air-conditioned mini-coach with experienced driver
- Sightseeing as specified
- Tickets to Soljans Wine tour, Rangitoto ferry, Mangatautari, Hobbiton, Otorohanga Kiwi House, Waitomo Caves, Southward Car Museum
- Jet boat ride on Waikato and Wanganui Rivers, Rail Cart ride.

Excludes

- Meals and refreshments (unless specified in inclusions)
- Items of a personal nature
- Twilight Kayak tour (NZ\$110)
- Evening ticket to Womad Festival (NZ\$80)
- Travel Insurance/Personal or Property Insurance

Group Size

Minimum 8 / maximum 12

About Your Tour Leader

Marie Coles is a born and bred Kiwi who grew up in a country village in the South Island of NZ some 50-odd years ago. She now resides in Cambridge, NZ with her husband and twins. Having worked in the travel industry for 25 years, Marie has travelled extensively throughout the world and lists New Zealand as her favourite destination. She has explored many nooks and crannies, and travelled her country from top to bottom more times than she can remember. With her local knowledge and passion for walking, Marie has carefully crafted this itinerary to include some iconic walks as well as venturing in to less-travelled areas, plus the excitement of different modes of transportation.



MEALS FOR YOUR TOUR

Daily breakfast is provided in your room – homemade toasted muesli, fruit, toast, spreads, free-range eggs (apart from Auckland on the first day which will be a picnic breakfast).

Lunch own expense - will generally be from a bakery or café depending on the daily itinerary.

Dinner own expense (apart from complimentary Wildside BBQ dinner) – generally we will eat as a group at a local restaurant.

PACKING

One main luggage bag (ideally with wheels) plus a daypack suitable to carry on your walks. Casual travelling and walking clothes, lightweight walking shoes and a good quality raincoat are the core ingredients! Tour members will be given a detailed packing list at time of booking.

AGE AND CAPABILITIES

This Wildside Travel leisure walking tour is designed to appeal mature travellers. Age is of no consideration provided you are a reasonably fit & active person. The majority of our tour member's fall into the 40's to late 70's age range and enjoy our unhurried style of small-group travel.

ROOMING

Rooms will be either Double or Twin-share. If you prefer to have your own room the Single supplement is \$1150. For solo travellers we are happy to find room-mates (same gender) if there is someone else willing to share. If we are unable to find you a room-mate, you will be required to pay the single supplement of \$1150.

BOOKING PROCEDURE & DEPOSIT

To secure your booking on this tour, please complete the enclosed form (one per couple) and forward to us with copies of your passports and a non-refundable deposit of \$500 per person.

FINAL PAYMENT

The balance of your tour cost is due **6 January 2019**. Payment can be made via Bank Transfer, Credit Card or Cheque.

CANCELLATION TERMS

Should **Wildside Travel** cancel the trip, for any reason beyond our control, you will receive a full refund of all monies paid. Should **you** need to cancel, your deposit is forfeited. If you have paid in full (after 5 January 2018) a refund will be calculated as follows:

Any time after booking	:	Loss of Deposit
Up to full payment date	:	Loss of Deposit
65 days to 30 days	:	50% of tour price is forfeited
Inside 30 days	:	100% of tour price is forfeited

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Comprehensive Travel & Medical Insurance for International visitors is essential for this tour. We recommend you purchase insurance at the same time you make any payments so we can be completely confident of your cover. You will be required to provide us with details of your Travel Insurance and any medical conditions we should know about at final payment date: Insurer, policy number, contact phone number required.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

All tour members must be in possession of a valid passport (if you reside outside of New Zealand) or Photo ID (if you reside in New Zealand). It is ultimately your responsibility to have the necessary documentation to travel.

CONDITIONS

Wildside will do everything possible to ensure your tour is a wonderful travelling experience – but we do reserve the right to amend the itinerary due to weather, road and vehicle problems, or other civil circumstances beyond our control. We will also endeavour to take the utmost care of you and your personal property, but we will not be held liable for any accident, personal injury, damage or loss of property, delays or defaults in the performance of other operators whose services we employ.

Booking Form: NZ NORTH ISLAND WALKING TOUR

Please complete, sign and return this form, along with a non-refundable deposit of \$500 per person to:

WILDSIDE TRAVEL

PO Box 215

MOTUEKA 7120

Mr / Mrs / Miss/ Ms _____ Known as: _____

Mailing Address _____

Email _____

Day-time or Mobile _____

Occupation _____

Any Dietary Requirements we need to know _____

Emergency contact person name and number _____

Walking Group or Club you belong to _____

I would prefer a Single Room, and are happy to pay the Single Supplement of \$1280 Yes/ No

Please add Domestic flights to /from Auckland or Wellington in conjunction with Tour arrangements
– please ask us for a quote

Yes / No Thank You From _____ to _____

Please book our pre or post accommodation in Auckland/Wellington suitable with Tour arrangements

Yes / No Thank You

Extend or add other arrangements to your tour: Please email us ☺

I have read the Wildside Travel tour booking terms & conditions for the nature/walking tour travelling
in the New Zealand North Island in March 2018, and accept them.

SIGNATURE (*both signatures required*)

DATE

Payment options:

Cheques – payable to 'Wildside Travel'

Bank Transfer – ASB 12-3244-0006728-00 Reference: Surname/369063

Credit Card – A 2% surcharge will apply

Visa / MasterCard _____

Expiry: _____ CSC: _____

Name on card: _____

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TRAVEL BROKER