



# New Zealand Culinary Tour

8 days

## Tour Description

*The stunning natural scenery and exciting food scene draw visitors to New Zealand each year. With a primarily agricultural economy, the country has become well-known for its fresh ingredient based cuisine. Locals and visitors alike savor seafood recipes and plentiful lamb, as well as a variety of vegetable dishes. The wines produced in the country are recognized as some of the best in the world. Sample New Zealand's bounty while learning about the agricultural methods and preparation processes all while surrounded by attractive landscapes.*

## Highlights

- ❖ Auckland City Tour
- ❖ Explore the Glowworm Grotto at the Waitomo Caves
- ❖ Five specialty lunches and five winery visits
- ❖ Visit a Maori village
- ❖ Experience a geothermal site in Rotorua
- ❖ Fruit orchard visit and tasting
- ❖ Art Deco city tour in Napier
- ❖ Olive grove visit with tasting
- ❖ Marlborough Sounds cruise with mussel farm visit
- ❖ Farewell dinner with behind the scenes visit to an award winning restaurant kitchen

## Sample Tour Itinerary

### ***Auckland – 1 night***

#### **Day 1: Arrive Auckland**

At the Auckland airport you will be greeted and escorted to your private coach for a sightseeing tour of Auckland. Auckland is situated on the narrow isthmus between the Tasman Sea and the Pacific Ocean and is noted for its extensive parks and beautiful gardens. Unique to this city are a large number of extinct volcanic cones thrusting sharply upward out of a sea of houses. Your tour includes a visit to the Auckland War Memorial Museum for a visit to its unique Maori Court. After free time to grab a bite to eat and shop, you'll be taken to a special wine tasting experience featuring the many wine regions of New Zealand. Upon completion of your tour your coach will take you to your hotel. The remainder of the day is at leisure.

### ***Rotorua – 1 night***

#### **Day 2:**

After breakfast this morning board your coach for the trip to Rotorua. Your first stop will be a guided tour of Waitomo Caves. The highlight of the tour is an unrivalled boat trip through the spectacular Glowworm Grotto where the roof sparkles with the lights of glowworm larvae as you glide silently through the grotto with the tiny lights reflecting off the water.

From the caves you will be taken to a nearby farm to enjoy a New Zealand style BBQ lunch while enjoying the extensive views over the Waitomo countryside.



Upon arrival in Rotorua, visit Rainbow Springs for guided admission to the springs & streams that teem with wild trout. Many of New Zealand's unique flora & fauna are featured, including the Tuatara lizard & New Zealand's national icon, the flightless kiwi bird. When your tour is done you will be transferred to your Rotorua hotel.

### ***Napier – 2 nights***

#### **Day 3:**

Before journeying to Napier visit Te Puia, the Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve & Maori Arts and Crafts Center for a guided tour of the Maori Pa (village site) & the institute where young Maoris are taught the intricacies of traditional carving. From there, visit the geothermal reserve to view the boiling mud pools & geysers.

En route to Napier venture off the beaten path to a remote estate where you will be treated to a truly unique Maori dining experience. A professional chef and expert hunter/gatherer will demonstrate traditional Maori cooking methods to create a magnificent lunch for you to enjoy.

When you arrive in Napier you will first be taken to a Hawkes Bay winery for a tour and tasting before ending your day's travels at your hotel.

#### **Day 4:**

This morning starts with a guided walking tour of Napier's Art Deco downtown. After 1931's violent earthquake and subsequent fires most of Napier's commercial heart was destroyed. The city rebuilt in the 'art deco' style popular at the time. Nowhere else can you see such a variety of these buildings in such a concentrated area.

Following your tour meet your coach and head to a local winery for a tour and tasting followed by a gourmet lunch on the terrace.

For your final stop of the day you will be taken to a working fruit orchard. Experience first-hand how to grow some of the finest fruit in the world from the second generation owners of the orchard. Fruit tasting is included so you can experience what has made Hawke's Bay famous for fruit growing.

Upon return to your hotel the remainder of the day is at your leisure.

### ***Martinborough – 1 night***

#### **Day 5:**

After breakfast this morning board your coach for the trip south to Martinborough, its soils and predictable climate make the area ideal for wine making, as they are said to be similar to the Burgundy region of central France. Logically then, Pinot Noir is the most planted variety and is widely available in local wineries.

Upon arrival in Martinborough, visit an olive grove and enjoy tastings of their range of extra virgin olive oil and specialty infused oils. Next visit one of the founding wineries of the district where the viticulturist and winemaker will take the group into the vineyard to show how great wine can only come from great grapes. After we will taste a range of Martinborough's fine wines, including some award-winning Pinot Noir.

Upon completion of these visits, you will be transferred to you Martinborough accommodation.



## **Blenheim – 2 nights**

### **Day 6:**

Your day starts off with a trip into the heart of Wellington, New Zealand's capital city situated at the southern end of the North Island. Wellington is surrounded by the rugged beauty of green hills, and has the most spectacular skyline of all major cities in New Zealand. The rapid modern growth has not altogether been at the expense of the older buildings as even today the strong Victorian influence is testimony to Wellington's early establishment as the country's center of political life.

Enjoy a panoramic tour of the city before being dropped off at the Interisland Ferry Terminal for your trip across the Cook Strait to the South Island. When your ferry arrives in Picton you will be met and transported to your hotel in Blenheim.

### **Day 7:**

Your morning begins with a short drive to Havelock where you will spend an informative and relaxing morning cruising the Marlborough Sounds. Take in the natural beauty of this tranquil environment; learn about the history of the Marlborough Sounds and the pioneering families who have settled here. During the cruise you will get to visit a Greenshell Mussel farm where your skipper will explain the intricacies of growing this delicacy in the Sounds. While at the mussel farm your skipper will serve freshly steamed mussels and serve them with a glass of Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc.

On completion of your cruise you'll be whisked off to a Blenheim area winery for a privately hosted lunch where your specialty dishes prepared with fresh local seasonal produce will be expertly matched to the wines included with lunch.

After some time to freshen up at your hotel head back out into the countryside for the ultimate behind the scenes experience at a renowned estate and its award winning restaurant. Not only will you enjoy a guided tour of the estates winery, vineyard and barrel hall, but you will also have plenty of time in the kitchen to observe the chefs preparing for the coming service and creating the gourmet menu's many components. Then it's your turn to head out into the restaurant for some serious pampering. Your dinner experience includes aperitif with appetizers, gourmet dinner with matching wines, coffee/tea and petit fours. After dinner, you will be transferred back to your hotel.

### **Day 8:**

Board a flight from Blenheim to Auckland where you will connect to your international flight home.

## **INCLUSIONS**

- Accommodations: Auckland 1 night, Rotorua 1 night, Napier 2 nights, Martinborough 1 night, Blenheim 2 nights
- Meals: Continental breakfast daily, lunch and dinner as noted in itinerary
- Ground transportation via air conditioned luxury coach
- Ferry from Wellington to Picton & Flight from Blenheim to Auckland
- English speaking assistants and guides
- Admission tickets as outlined in the itinerary