

NEW ZEALAND

sample self-drive farmstay itinerary

18 Day Tour Module

Day 1 Auckland

Pick up your rental car on arrival at Auckland airport. New Zealand's largest and most cosmopolitan city, Auckland "City of Sails", will provide you with an entertaining start to your New Zealand experience with its variety of daytime and evening activities.

After booking into your hotel a chance to take in the city sights. Wander down to the water front where the Americas cup was held, or perhaps a look at Kelly Tarlton's underwater world, NZ's museum of Transport and Technology, the Maritime museum, a visit to the amazing Sky Tower (if heights aren't a problem) and a drive up Mt Eden.

Evening: Auckland Hotel

Day 2 Auckland - Cambridge

Depart Auckland and head South on the motorway over the rolling Bombay Hills and Pukekohe region where large areas of green vegetables are produced to supply the city and for export. Follow New Zealand's longest river - the Waikato River into the province of the same name. Dubbed the "milk bowl" of New Zealand, Waikato is renowned for its efficient pasture based dairy farming, horse studs, beef, deer, sheep and horticultural enterprises.

You will have a farmstay tonight, near the pretty town of Cambridge, in the heart of the Waikato. Here you will become acquainted with a typical New Zealand farm and friendly farming family. After getting to know your hosts and surroundings, take a short tour of the farm and enjoy a home cooked dinner.

Evening: Farmstay

Day 3 Cambridge – Coromandel

Departing Cambridge travel to the Coromandel Peninsular. Settle in to Puka Park Resort at Pauanui for a two-night stay. Set beside the sea, amidst native bush, this is one of New Zealand's premier holiday spots.

Evening: Puka Park Resort

Day 4 Coromandel

Handy to golf, bush walks, sandy beaches, marinas and a lovely coastline, there are plenty of things to see and do. We recommend Kiwi Dundee Tours as a great way to see the area.

Evening: Puka Park Resort

Day 5 Coromandel – Rotorua

A chance to further explore the Coromandel before travelling on to Rotorua, an interesting thermal region and centre of native Maori culture.

Evening: Okawa Bay Resort.

Day 6 Rotorua

Here you can visit the Agrodome for an entertaining exhibition of the New Zealand sheep industry and visit Rainbow Springs for a peek at the native flora and fauna, including large brown and rainbow trout. Another interesting place to visit is Whakarewarewa thermal area where boiling mud pools and spouting geysers can be seen. A great way to end the day is to go to a Maori hangi (feast) and concert for a great nights entertainment.

Evening: Okawa Bay Resort

Day 7 Rotorua - Taupo – Waipukurau

Depart Rotorua and travel to Taupo. Passing the geothermal area of Wairakei, with a stop to view the famous Huka Falls on the outskirts of Lake Taupo. Lake Taupo is a popular holiday area, renowned for its fishing and recreational sports. Passing through Taupo travel on to Napier, the "Art Deco City" of New Zealand. Continue south to Waipukurau for a one-night stay on a sheep and beef farm.

Evening: Farmstay

Day 8 Waipukurau – Martinborough

After time with your hosts this morning, travel to the Wairarapa - a large rural region with a very sparse population. Visit the Wine Village of Martinborough. High sunshine hours and low autumn rainfall have helped wine makers in this region win international awards. Many are boutique wineries and are distinguished from

other New Zealand wine areas by the high proportion of red grape plantings and a reputation for quality pinot noir, among other varieties. There is plenty to see and do in this region.

Evening: Martinborough Hotel

Day 9 Martinborough – Blenheim

Travel over the Rimutaka Hill to the capital city Wellington, where you will catch the Ferry to Picton - gateway to the South Island. Travel 25 km to Blenheim, New Zealand's "Sunshine" capital, because of its long sunshine hours. Blenheim is ideally suited to wine production with thousands of hectares now devoted to attractive vineyards. Visit one of these and perhaps do some wine tasting at one of the numerous wineries in this area.

Evening: Peppertree Homestead

Day 10 Blenheim

A chance today to perhaps do some shopping or take a tour of some country crafts and gardens, or just relax.

Evening: Peppertree Homestead

Day 11 Blenheim - Kaikoura

Kaikoura, a small town set in a picturesque location between 9000 ft high mountains and the sea, has become an important tourist destination in recent years with the establishment of a charter service to view the amazing marine life which is found offshore. The sea floor plunges quickly to depths of more than 5000 ft, and these waters are home to huge whales and playful dolphins. Kaikoura means "to eat crayfish" underlining the area's reputation as a source of that delicacy.

Seals by the hundreds are found on the rocks around the tip of the Kaikoura Peninsula. This site is also good for a view of large numbers of sea birds.

Tonight enjoy the hospitality of a New Zealand farming family.

Evening: Farmstay

Day 12 Kaikoura - Christchurch

Travel south to Christchurch the "Garden City". In Christchurch you can enjoy an array of sights and activities. Take a walk along attractive Sumner Beach, visit nearby new pier which reaches 400 meters out into the South Pacific, visit the Arts centre, Botanical Gardens or play golf in Hagley Park. The city's casino also provides some exciting evening entertainment, as do the many restaurants and bars.

Evening: Christchurch Hotel

Day 13 Christchurch

Some options for today would be to catch the famous "Tranz Alpine Express" from Christchurch to Greymouth on the West Coast or have the thrill of travelling by coach, jet boat, four wheel drive Unimog and lastly Tranz Alpine Express. Perhaps even a drive to Hanmer Springs for a soak in the thermal pools set amongst the forests and mountains.

Evening: Christchurch Hotel

Day 14 Christchurch – Fairlie

Leave Christchurch to head south across the vast Canterbury Plains with its rich tapestry of agricultural enterprises. Travel along the snow capped Southern Alps, before turning inland through the green rolling pastures of Geraldine, where crops, sheep, cattle and deer farms dominate the scene.

Arrive in Fairlie, the 'Gateway to the Mackenzie Country'. The township rests in the Fairlie Basin, surrounded by the beautiful high country of the Two Thumb Range. Here you will have the opportunity to experience New Zealand farming life whilst on your farmstay.

Evening: Farmstay

Day 15 Fairlie – Queenstown

Following your stay at one of Fairlie's rural retreats, you will continue inland through the wide open spaces of the Mackenzie Basin. Perhaps a stop at Lake Tekapo, one of the region's vibrant aqua blue lakes. Here, you can view New Zealand's highest peak, Mount Cook, or visit the statue of the infamous sheep rustler - James Mackenzie's dog before travelling on passing the hydro lakes and Kawarau Gorge to Queenstown.

Set on the shores of Lake Wakatipu, amidst spectacular alpine scenery, including the rugged Remarkable Mountains, Queenstown's the place to enjoy a range of outdoor pursuits from horse trekking to fishing, or even a cruise upon the lake aboard the historic TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak high country station. In the township itself there are numerous shops, restaurants, bars, and accommodation within close proximity. For the more adventurous, bungy jumping, jet boating, parapenting or white water rafting may appeal to your adrenalin seeking nature!

Evening: Queenstown Hotel

Day 16 Queenstown

A wide choice for today's activities. Some suggestions would be a tour to Milford Sound for the day, drive to the old gold mining village of Arrowtown, with a stop at Queenstown's dried flower barn, or a game of golf at the exclusive Mill Brook Resort.

Evening: Queenstown Hotel

Day 17 Queenstown - Wanaka - Franz Josef

After your refreshing stay in Queenstown, travel North through the spectacular Kawarau Gorge where many goldminers made (or lost) their fortunes one hundred and fifty years ago. Follow through the fruit growing Cromwell and Lowburn regions and on to Lake Wanaka.

Wanaka is a beautiful settlement on the lake shores amidst tall mountains covered in golden tussocks and snow during the cooler seasons. The jewel at the heart of the Wanaka region is Mount Aspiring National Park, with its awesome mitered mountain, glittering glaciers, waterfalls and native bush.

The breathtaking scenery has a practical purpose also. It is the home of the merino sheep and hereford cattle which are farmed in this high country region in a grand scale. Travel further north to Franz Josef for your farmstay for the evening.

Evening: Farmstay Franz Josef

Day 18 Franz Josef - Christchurch

After time spent with your hosts, depart Franz Josef and head back to Christchurch to connect with your international flight homeward bound or perhaps an extra night in Christchurch before departure!