

Bays & Beyond

Nov 2021 | 8 nights
Auckland - Bay of Plenty - Waikato



Sat 06 Nov

AUCKLAND

Arrive Auckland by 10am. City and airport pick ups available. We'll then drive directly to **Kumeu Wine Country** for a Mini Wine & Food Degustation. **Westbrook** is a boutique winery and a lovely setting to get to know your fellow travellers. We'll then head in to the city, check in to our Parnell hotel, freshen up and then head down to the **Viaduct Marina** for drinks & dinner.

Sun 07 Nov

RANGITOTO ISLAND – TE AROHA

A short ferry ride this morning 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 (weather permitting) with spectacular views of the Hauraki Gulf and Auckland.

Later this afternoon we depart the city and journey over the Bombay Hills into the mighty Waikato via **cow-crazy Morrinsville** and on to the township of **Te Aroha**. Nestled at the foot of Mt Te Aroha, is where you will find the **Mokena Hou Geysers** (the only natural soda water geysers in the world) and right next to this is the oldest intact **Edwardian domain** in New Zealand.

Walking: 2 hours

Mon 08 Nov

KARANGAHAKE GORGE – WAIHI BEACH

A visit to a **local artist** is our first engagement of the day – you will be in awe at what this talented guy can make out of scrap. In nearby **Paeroa** we'll stop for a photo opportunity at the famous **L&P bottle** before continuing on to **Karangahake Gorge** at the base of the Coromandel Range. Our walk this morning will take us deep in to the gorge following the old railway line through tunnels, over bridges, past mining remains and the "windows".

In the afternoon we call in to the small gold mining town of **Waihi** and see the Martha open pit mine before arriving at **Waihi Beach**. After settling in to our "bach" we'll take a stroll down to the beach before sundowners and fish'n'chips.

Walking: 1 + 1 hour

Tue 09 Nov

WAIHI BEACH

This morning we will walk the **Homunga track** via picturesque **Orokawa Bay** to **Waihi Beach**. This is a captivating trail following the coastline across farmland and through native bush. Get in tune with the cicadas anthem, chortling tuis and the ocean crashing on to the coast as you roam along the track enjoying an untouristy walk with stunning views.

Afternoon at leisure for shopping, relaxing or beach walking.

Walking: 3.5 hours

Wed 10 Nov

MT MAUNGANUI - CAMBRIDGE

The famed "Mount" beckons this morning. You have the option to either walk 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!

This afternoon's drive will take us from the Bay of Plenty over the Kaimai Ranges to the Waikato. Our base for the next few days is the charming town of Cambridge, known for its trees and champions and recently voted NZ's "**Most Beautiful Large Town**". Late afternoon orientation of the town including a stroll down Cambridge's own walk of fame – it's not quite Hollywood but you never know which famous Kiwi you might spot!

Walking: 1 + 1 hour

Thu 11 Nov

HAMILTON

This morning we'll visit **Zealong Tea Plantation**. Who would have thought in the middle of the Waikato you'd find an award-winning tea plantation! It all started with a camellia tree apparently. Our guide will lead us along the tea trail to learn how tea is picked and processed. We'll then learn the art of tea appreciation followed by a scrumptious high tea.

Enjoy the afternoon roaming through the popular **Hamilton Gardens**. The Gardens tell the story of gardening through different civilisations and time, and showcase a wonderful collection of plants and architecture. You will be astounded that Hamilton has such a fabulous internationally renowned treasure. From the Gardens we'll walk along the **Waikato River** to view the unique bridges, memorial gardens and riverfront homes.

Gloworm Kayak (highly recommended optional activity) - this adventure takes us out to Arapuni where we board kayaks for an easy paddle along the southern edge of Lake Karapiro. Enjoy the twilight & silence of being on the water as the day draws to an end. As night arrives over the lake, paddle slowly up the Pokaiwhenua Stream and through the canyon carved out by water over many hundreds of years. Native ferns & trees drape over you, bird life is all around. When darkness falls we float silently back downstream, being guided by the glow worms on either side sparkling like Christmas lights. A magical experience.

Walking: 2 hours

Fri 12 Nov

ORAKEI KORAKO – TIRAU

This morning we drive south 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. Time to explore the area by foot and soak up the sultry atmosphere.

We'll take a late lunch break in the quirky little town of **Tirau** where you'll come face-to-face with some corrugated characters.

This afternoon's walk is along the rural **Te Waihou Walkway** to the internationally acclaimed Blue Spring. The water here is so pure and supplies around 70% of NZ's bottled water.

Walking: 1 + 1 hour

Sat 13 Nov

MAUNGATAUTARI – ARAPUNI - HOBBITON

Just a short drive from Cambridge, is the **Maungatautari Ecological Sanctuary** where we will spend an informative few hours on a morning guided meander 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. Continue on to Arapuni for a walk over the **Arapuni swingbridge** and a picnic lunch beside the Waikato River.

Later this afternoon will be a visit to “Middle Earth”. 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 followed by a **banquet feast** fit for a Hobbit! The tables will be heaving with traditional Hobbit fare. At the end of the evening, take your hand-held lantern and stroll back along the Shire's paths seeing the village in a different light with chimneys smoking and lanterns glowing in the darkness. Just magic!

Walking: 1 + 1 hour

Sun 14 Nov

Tour ends

Your adventure ends in Cambridge this morning.

Price

NZ\$2390 per person twin share*

NZ\$700 single supplement

*if you would like to twin share, let us know and we'll endeavour to find you a room-mate

Tour Inclusions

- 8 nights accommodation (hotels, motels, private homes)
- Daily breakfast, 1 lunch, 3 dinners
- Tour leader / walking guide
- Transportation in modern air-conditioned mini-coach
- Sightseeing & entry as specified
- Arrival transfer in Auckland on Day 1
- Departure transfer to Hamilton Airport on Day 9

Excludes

- Meals and refreshments (unless specified in inclusions)
- Items of a personal nature
- Optional tours
- Auckland Airport transfer additional cost

Your Roam Navigator

Marie Coles is a born & bred Kiwi who had a carefree country upbringing in North Canterbury. She now resides in Cambridge with her family. Marie has travelled extensively and escorted tours to Africa, India, Middle East, Europe and her favourite destination - New Zealand. 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.



About the Walks

On average you will walk 5km per day, however some days may be longer and some shorter, some easy and some hard. The tour is aimed at leisure walkers who appreciate the outdoors.

Combination Tours

This tour can be combined with our West Coast Tour

Terms & Conditions apply. See www.roamtraveladventures.com/FAQ for full details.