



Wairakei & Chateau Tongariro

Wed 22 Sep 2021

We depart Hamilton/Cambridge early this morning and drive the scenic backroads to Wairakei. We arrive at Aratiatia Dam in time to see the gates opening and watching thousands of litres of water being released from the Dam creating a spectacular flow of water through a narrow gorge.

We'll then board a boat for a 7km cruise upstream to the mighty Huka Falls. Along the way you will have an interesting commentary about local history, flora and fauna. Morning tea is served onboard. Once at the Falls the boat gets up close enough to feel the spray on your face as you angle yourself for some exciting photos.

After the cruise, we pop down the road to Lava Glass where we settle in to a warm studio to watch very clever artists glass blowing. It really is quite a fascinating process, and the commentary is enlightening. A tasty lunch awaits us in the Café. Afterwards we take a roam around the Garden to see all sorts of glass sculptures in different shapes and sizes brightening up the landscape.

After checking in to our accommodation, we'll head across the road to for a stroll around a geothermal walkway. This is an easy scenic walk with hot water bubbling and geysers spurting over silica terraces amongst the bush. We end the day with a hot soak in the healing and therapeutic pools at Wairakei Terraces.

Dinner and overnight at Wairakei Resort. The hotel also has hot pools if you would like to have another swim before bed.

Accommodation: Wairakei Resort

Thu 23 Sep 2021

After breakfast, we'll drive into Taupo and visit L'Arte where you can see wonderful mosaic art scattered around the garden. In Taupo, there will be some free time to have a look at the shops and have lunch (own cost).

Early afternoon, we journey around Lake Taupo and into National Park. Along the way there may be time (weather permitting) to do a short bush/waterfall walk.

We check in to the iconic Chateau Tongariro and have some free time to relax in the hotel with its timeless elegance. Weather permitting, there will be stunning views of Mt Ngauruhoe and if you care to do some exploring outside the hotel you can also see Tongariro and Ruapehu.

Enjoy a 3-course dinner in the Ruapehu Room this evening and then a nightcap in the lounge listening to the live pianist.

Accommodation: Chateau Tongariro

Fri 24 Sep 2021

Before breakfast there will be an optional nature walk up behind the hotel for gorgeous views. If you are not a walker, enjoy a lie in!

After breakfast, we will make our way along the road to the Visitor Centre and spend some time learning about the area and watching an interesting film about volcanoes. A drive up the Bruce brings us to Whakapapa ski village and hopefully we'll have some good views if the weather is behaving. If the Skywaka is operating, you have the option of riding this further up the mountain (own cost).

Back at the hotel we have a decadent High Tea in the lounge in front of a huge picture window where hopefully we can see the mountain in all its glory.

It's a short drive into National Park where you will board the Northern Explorer train. Sit back and relax as the train winds its way round the Raurimu Spiral, through the King Country and into Waikato. Disembark in Hamilton and be transferred home. Or if you are from Auckland, you will stay on the train and make your own way home.

Cost:

NZ\$1060 per person twin share

NZ\$230 single supplement*

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

Includes:

- Driver/Guide
- Transportation in 12-seater minicoach
- 2 nights accommodation
- 2 breakfasts, 2 dinners, 1 lunch, 1 high tea, 1 morning tea
- Huka Falls Cruise
- Lava Glass lunch, glass blowing demo, sculpture garden
- Swim at Wairakei Terraces & entry to geothermal walkway
- Seat on Northern Explorer train to Hamilton
- Transfer from/to your home in Hamilton/Cambridge

Excludes:

- Flights/transportation to Hamilton/Cambridge
- Items of a personal nature / optional tours
- Refreshments



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