

2023 NZ Trip Itinerary

New Zealand

Overview: The NZ Trip. South Island and North Island, with a focus on hiking and wildlife. Start south and work our way north for bit warmer weather. South NZ in March seems much like Scotland in Sept/Oct. Nice days, but getting a little chilly. South has more hiking, mountains; North more beaches, hot springs.

USA>>NZ Entry Requirements

- ✓ USA is a waiver country, so VISA is not required but an NZeTA is; can stay up to 90 days. For **NZeTA**, use the iPhone app, NZ\$58/person, takes 72 hours. [Site is here](#) and [here](#). Complete couple of weeks prior to departure.
- ✓ ~~We also must complete a **Traveler Declaration** and receive a **Traveler Pass**. [Site is here](#) (see upper right corner of the page for link). Complete within 28 days of departure, once tickets are booked (need flight information).~~
No longer required as all covid restrictions were removed October 22, 2022
- ✓ We must have proof of **exit flight**
- ✓ NZ may require **printed proof of funds** (paid stays plus \$400/mo, or \$1000/mo).

Prescriptions – must have a prescription, in original bottle, up to 90-day supply.

COVID and NZ Travel

As of Sept 13, the NZ COVID traffic light system was retired, and no proof of vaccination required. Two RATs will be provided free on arrival, and travelers are encouraged to test Day 1, Day 5 and report issues (not required). [NZ Site](#)

Visit the [U.S. Embassy in NZ](#) for regular updates.

Diving – Current DL required (no International)

Weather – Summer Dec-Feb, Fall March-April. **Temp H/L in F**, *Rain mm//days*. [Site here](#)

- **Auckland** (N of North Isle): **Jan 73/63, 30//12; Feb 73/63, 30//10; Mar 72/59, 40//12**
- **Wellington** (S of North Isle): **Jan 68/59, 30 //12; Feb 70/61, 20//10; Mar 68/57, 30//11**
- **Christchurch** (mid South Isle) **Jan 73/55, 40 //12; Feb 72/54, 40//10; Mar 68/52, 50//10**
- **Queenstown** (center/mts SI): **Jan 72/50, 75//13; Feb 72/50, 52//13; Mar 68/48, 84//15**
- **Invercargill** (S of South Isle): **Jan 66/52, 130//23; Feb 64/50, 90//18; Mar 63/48, 70//22**

Resources

- Driving and Weather: <https://www.aa.co.nz/travel/time-and-distance-calculator/>, [NZ Weather](#)
- Best Blogs: [Rambling Shoes](#), [phenomenal globe](#), [discovernz](#), [NeverEndingVoyage NZ](#), and [trip advisor nz forum](#), [Never ending Voyage North Island Itinerary](#), [cycling ideas](#), [misstravelclogs](#)

New Zealand Foods – Savory pies (like Britain), boysenberries (world's top producer), manuka honey, Whittaker's Chocolates (see regional flavors), green-lipped mussels in Picton. Lamb, of course, and fresh fish, of course!

2023 NZ Trip Itinerary

Jan 09 – Jan 11: Flight Charlotte CLT to Christchurch NZ CHC

Jan 11 – Jan 13: Christchurch 2N (Wednesday-Friday).
Jan 13 – Jan 17: Akaroa 4N (Friday-Tuesday).
Jan 17 – Jan 18: Lake Tekapo 1N (Tuesday-Wednesday).
Jan 18 – Jan 20: Lake Pukaki / Mt. Cook 2N (Wednesday-Friday).
Jan 20 – Jan 21: Oamaru 1N (Friday-Saturday).
Jan 21 – Jan 26: Dunedin 5N (Saturday-Thursday)
Jan 26 – Jan 28: Caitlins / Kaka Point 2N (Thursday-Saturday)
Jan 28 – Jan 30: Stewart Island 2N (Saturday-Monday).
Jan 30 – Feb 01: Te Anau 2N (Monday-Wednesday)
Feb 01 – Feb 02: Doubtful Sound Cruise 1N (Wednesday-Thursday)
Feb 02 – Feb 09: Queenstown 7N (Thursday-Thursday)
Feb 09 – Feb 10: Wanaka 1N (Thursday – Friday)
Feb 10 – Feb 11: Franz Joseph 1N (Friday – Saturday)
Feb 11 – Feb 13: Punakaiki 2N (Saturday – Monday)
Feb 13 – Feb 16: Kaiteriteri 3N (Monday – Thursday)
Feb 16 – Feb 19: Golden Bay / 3N (Thursday – Sunday)
Feb 19 – Feb 26: Renwick 7N (Sunday – Sunday)

Feb 26 – Feb 26: Ferry Picton to Wellington @2:15pm (check-in before 1:15pm) 0N (Sunday)

Feb 26 – March 01: Wellington 3N (Wednesday – Friday)
March 01 – March 03: Napier / Hawk’s Bay NP 2N (Wednesday – Friday)
March 03 – March 05: Whakapapa / Tongariro NP 2N (Friday – Sunday)
March 05 – March 07: New Plymouth / Egmont NP 2N (Sunday – Tuesday)
March 07 – March 10: Rotura 3N (Tuesday – Friday)
March 10 – March 13: Hahei 3N (Friday – Monday)
March 13 – March 20: Russell 7N (Monday – Monday)
March 20 – March 21: Kauri Trees and stay in Dargaville 1N (Monday – Tuesday)
March 21 – March 23: Auckland 2N (Tuesday – Thursday)

Mar 23 – Mar 23: Flight Auckland NZ to Kona, Hawaii 1N (Friday – Friday)

Mar 23 – Mar 24: Stay Volcano 1N (Thursday – Friday)
Mar 24 – Mar 29: Pahoa, Hawaii 5N (Friday – Wednesday)

Mar 29 – Mar 30: Fly home to CLT (1N, Wednesday)

2023 NZ Trip Itinerary

Jan 09 – Jan 11: Flight Charlotte CLT to Christchurch NZ CHC

Transit - Uber

Flight - CLT-DFW | Charlotte to Dallas

Flight - DFW-AKL | Dallas to Auckland

Flight - AKL-CHC | Auckland to Christchurch

Transit *Pick-up rental car at Airport – see below*

Jan 11 – Jan 13: Christchurch 2N (Wednesday-Friday).

Christchurch: Botanic Garden, New Regent Street, Punting, Tram, and tbd.

Ideas: [misstravelclogs](#)

Car – Pickup at Christchurch Airport. Apex Rentals

Includes South Island - North Island ferry Picton to Wellington across Cook Strait

Stay – AirBnB

Day -----

- Just dinner the first night. Run the park in the morning.
 - Cathedral, street art tour, CC Art Gallery, tram, punting River Avon, gondola, botanic gardens, Hagley park, Riccarton house and bush, Saturday farmer's market, port hills, New Regent street, Lyttelton
-

Jan 13 – Jan 17: Akaroa 4N (Friday-Tuesday).

Akaroa: The sole French town in NZ. Birding Flat, Misty Peaks/Banks Hinewai Nature Reserve, penguins?

Ideas: [NZ Pocket Guide](#), [NZTravelTips](#),

Enroute – Birdlings Flat, Barry's Bay Cheese. Driving time is about 1½ hr, [GM route here](#).

Stay – booking.com

Day -----

- TBD. [Kayak safari](#) for seals/penguins/albatross/dolphins, Hinewai Nature Reserve ([Fools and Dreamers](#)), French Food, Barry's Bay Cheese, Giant's House garden, Rhino Walk, Lighthouse, Garden of Tane, hike
-

Jan 17 – Jan 18: Lake Tekapo 1N (Tuesday-Wednesday).

Lake Tekapo: Mt John + Observatory, Lupin Fields, Good Shepard Church, Dark Skies

Ideas: Stargazing tour? (Erin Merlie recommended).

Enroute – Peel Forest, Lupin Field, Good Shepard. Driving time is about 4 hr, [GM route here](#).

Stay – booking.com

Day -----

- Stay up and watch the stars (dark sky preserve). Tour options: [Silver River](#), [Dark Sky](#), with [Hot Pool](#)
 - Next morning, run and hike Mt. St. John
-

Jan 18 – Jan 20: Lake Pukaki / Mt. Cook 2N (Wednesday-Friday).

Lake Tekapo: Mt Cook drive, village, Tasman Glacier, enjoy the hotel/lake

Ideas: AllTrails

2023 NZ Trip Itinerary

Enroute – N/A. Driving time is only ½ hr, [GM route here](#).

Stay – [Lakestone Lodge](#)

Day -----

- Stay up and watch the stars (dark sky preserve). Enjoy the soaker tub.
- Hike Aoraki/Mt. Cook. See Alltrails NZ favorites list - [Kea Viewpoint](#) or [Hooker Valley](#) are a good options.

Jan 20 – Jan 21: Oamaru 1N (Friday-Saturday).

Oamaru: Blue penguins! Arrange a guided tour

Ideas: Penguin tours

Enroute – Elephant Rocks. Driving time is about 2 hr, [GM route here](#).

Stay – booking.com

Day -----

- Arrange for guided tour to see penguins (they come ashore at dusk), Steam Punk HQ, local brews

Jan 21 – Jan 26: Dunedin 5N (Saturday-Thursday)

Dunedin: Architecture, run, albatross & penguin, hidden cannon, city

Ideas: need to find Burns Night dinner and book Albatross/Penguin Tour

Enroute – Moeraki Boulders, Shag Point lookout. Driving time is about 2 hr, [GM route here](#).

Stay – AirBnB

Day -----

- Albatross Center / Blue or Yellow Penguins ([guided tour](#)) / Hidden Gun Museum, Octagon.

Day -----

- Burns Night Jan 25! Street Art Trail (map at TI), The Octagon and surrounding architecture, botanic garden and aviary, rail station, Larnach Castle. Emerson Brewery. Bike trip? Hike Otago Peninsula.

Jan 26 – Jan 28: Caitlins / Kaka Point 2N (Thursday-Saturday)

Caitlins: Slope Point, Caitlins National Park hike, beaches for seals, sea lions, penguins

Ideas: [Dave](#), [We Seek](#)

Enroute – Slow beach road route. Driving time is about 2½ hr, [GM route here](#). Direct is 1½ hr

Stay – [Rosebank Lodge on booking.com](#)

Day -----

- Relax, enjoy the sea, or possibly hike in Caitlins. Look for yellow-eye penguins

Jan 28 – Jan 30: Stewart Island 2N (Saturday-Monday).

Stewart Island: hikes the NP and do a birding tour to see kiwis and penguins

Ideas: [young](#)

Enroute – Slope Point. Driving time is 3 hr, plus stop time. [GM route here](#). Direct route is 2¼ hr

Park – parking at ferry terminal (unclear if paid or free)

Ferry – \$85/pp, ppd. Cancel 24hr prior. Depart: 9:45 **1:45 (what we booked)**, 5:15, arrive by **1:15pm**

Stay – [Stewart Island Lodge](#) – booked direct.

2023 NZ Trip Itinerary

Transit – hotel will pick us up from the ferry terminal. Call them to arrange.

Day -----

- **Book Dinner Ahead!** South Sea Hotel recommended +6432191059.
- Kiwi's in NP, day hikes (Fergully or Horseshoe Point?), Southern Lights (Aurora Australis best March-Sept, but who knows?), Ulva Island bird sanctuary. **Guided [bird walk here](#)**

Jan 30 – Feb 01: Te Anau 2N (Monday-Wednesday)

Te Anau: Glow Worm Caves, LoTR sites south, hike nearby

Ideas: see GM for LoTR sites, hike, maybe glow-worm caves (planning this for Waitomo also)

Transit – hotel will take us to the ferry, **let them know day before the timing**

Ferry – \$85/pp, ppd. [Ferry site](#). 2 bags/person, 1 hr cruise. Cancel 24hr prior

Depart: 8am **12:15 (what we booked)**, 3:30, **arrive by 11:45pm**

Enroute – before depart, Burt Munro's Fastest Indian (E Hayes & sons) and Bill Richardson museums.

Driving time is about 2½ hr, [GM route here](#).

Stay – booking.com

Day -----

- Reserve glow worms cave tour, LoTR sites nearby, Kepler Track Swinging Bridge, bike [Lake2Lake](#) trail

Feb 01 – Feb 02: Doubtful Sound Cruise 1N (Wednesday-Thursday)

Doubtful Sound: Enjoy the views

Ideas: just cruise, kayaking is optional (bring right clothes!)

Enroute – Driving time is about ½ hr, plus park and walk. Depart by 11am. [GM route here](#).

Stay – Doubtful Sound Cruise with RealNZ. Phone +64 800 656501

Check-in at noon, depart at 12:30.

Real Journeys Visitor Center, 64 Waiau Street, Pearl Harbour, Manapouri 9643

2 adults, double cabin. Cruise across Lake Manapouri, then bus, the cruise the sound.

Buffet dinner and breakfast. Use of kayak or small boat is included (optional).

Bring: • *Non-slip shoes/ boots* • *Waterproof jacket* • *warm sweater/fleece jacket* • *Sunscreen/sunglasses* • *Insect repellent* • *Swimwear (optional)* • *Camera* • *Overnight bag only* • *Personal medication including for asthma and allergies*

Feb 02 – Feb 09: Queenstown 7N (Thursday-Thursday)

Queenstown: Ben Lomond, cable car, city, local hikes, run the parks

Ideas: see google maps

Enroute – n/a. Driving time is about 2 hr, [GM route here](#).

Stay – [Stay in the Southern Sky on VRBO](#)

Day – Friday Feb 3 -----

- Fly/cruise/fly Milford Sound. [Glenorchy Air](#), Arrive 11am (12 min [drive](#)).

- Flight at 11:30, 4 ½ hour trip. 120 min airborne, 145 min cruise, one box lunch to split. Backup [option 2](#)

Day -----

- Ben Lomond, city, local hikes and food

2023 NZ Trip Itinerary

- Queenstown Wineries – [Gibbston Valley](#). The southern-most wine region in the world, it makes great Pinot Noirs. Visit by tour or car. Biking is good – [Going Blue Bikes](#) will drop off and pick up. Recommended wineries: Peregrine, Kinross, Brennan, and Mt Rosa.
- Onsen Hot Pools, Bob's Cove Track / Ithilian (LoTR), luge (recommended by Erin Merlie),

Feb 09 – Feb 10: Wanaka 1N (Thursday – Friday)

Wanaka: That tree, lavender, Rippon Winery, Roy's Peak Hike

Ideas: see hikes below and get a picture of the famous tree, see Beacon point and perhaps Rippon Winery

Enroute – Kawarau Gorge (suspension bridge, LoTR, birth of bungee), Lavender Farm, That Wanaka Tree.

Driving time is about 1½ hr, [GM route here](#).

Hike – [Roy's Peak](#) (4300', 10mi), [Rob Roy](#) (1500', 6½ mi), or [Rocky Mountain](#) (1600', 4½ mi)

Stay – [Wanaka Hotel on booking.com](#)

Day -----

- If we hiked on arrival, run the next morning and then depart for 4-hr drive to FJ

Feb 10 – Feb 11: Franz Joseph 1N (Friday – Saturday)

Franz Josef: Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers. Views limited on short hikes, better on hard ones :-)

Ideas: enjoy sights enroute, then heli-hike the next morning. **Can 24-hr ahead to confirm heli-hike**

Enroute – Consider stops below. Driving time is about 4 hr, [GM route here](#)

- Lake Moeraki, Knights Point Lookout, Ship Creek, Haast Bridge and Rapids, Roaring Billy Falls, Pleasant Flats, Fantail Falls, Thunder Creek Falls(don't miss), Blue Pools walk , Makarora

Stay – [booking.com](#)

Day -----

- If we arrive early hike: [Fox route](#) (4mi, easy), FJ easy (1mi), [Robert's Point](#) (6½ mi, 1800, suspension bridges), and finally [Alex Knob](#) (9½ mi, 3600') are the best options.

Feb 11 – Feb 13: Punakaiki 2N (Saturday – Monday)

Punakaiki: Pancake Rocks and Blowhole formations walk. Canoe/kayak up the river

Ideas: see below

Heli-hike – Feb 11 [Franz Josef Glacier Guides](#). cancel 24hr prior

11:30am departure, arrive by 10:00 for briefing and equipment fitting

Glacier Base, 63 Cron Street, Franz Josef (opposite Orange Sheep Caravan Park)

Call and confirm 24 hour prior to the hike Phone: +6437520763

Bring: 3-4 warm upper body layers (ideally woollen or polypro, not cotton) | pair of lightweight trousers/shorts (no jeans or ski pants) | sunglasses | water bottle | small snack | camera

Provided: Waterproof jacket | Waterproof over trousers | Waterproof hiking boots | Thermal socks | Beanie | Mittens | Extra layers (if you require any) | Crampons | A small waist bag | Harness and helmet | Walking pole | Sunscreen

Do NOT bring: Jeans, or any form of denim clothing | Ski pants as these are a trip hazard due to the flare at the bottom of the pants. Feel free to bring the thermal underlayer though | Selfie-sticks or Galaxy Note 7 Mobile Phones as the Civil Aviation Authority does not allow the use of these devices | Spare camera batteries and camera bag | A backpack as there is limited space in the helicopters, we please ask you to leave backpacks behind

2023 NZ Trip Itinerary

Enroute – Greymouth. Jade and gold mining history. Pancake Rocks (1mi, easy)
Driving time is about 3 hr, [GM route here](#)

Stay – [Woodpecker Bay Bach on airbnb](#)

Day -----

- Run in the morning. Punakaiki is smaller, but it has some lovely walks such as the Truman Beach Track, the Pancake Rocks (1 mi, easy), the cave stream.
- Hire canoes for \$20 and easily paddle up the Porotari River into Paparoa National Park. the limestone bluffs, nikau palms and native forest is supposed to be absolutely stunning

Feb 13 – Feb 16: Kaiteriteri 3N (Monday – Thursday)

Kaiteriteri: Great Taste Trail biking, water taxi ATNP hike, kayak

Ideas: [NeverEndingJourney](#), see also Trip Advisor tips. Here for [Great Taste Bike](#) ideas

Enroute – Cape Foulwind Seal Colony, St. Araud (pier/lakeview, perhaps a hike) Forsters & Neudorf Vinyards.
Driving time is about 5-6 hr, [GM route here](#)

Stay – [Kaiteri Seachange](#) on airbnb

Day -----

- Great Taste Trail segment – walk to Kaiteriteri and rent/ride bike to Moteka and back (**sched bike**)
- Great Taste Trail segment – drive to Richmond/Stoke and rent+ride bike 25 mi to Rabbit Island/back (**sched bike**)
- Abel Tasman NP hike – water taxi to a drop point, hike, water taxi back from pickup point (**research, sched**). Recommended on Trip Advisor Forum: <https://abeltasmanseashuttles.co.nz/>
- Wineries if we didn't stop enroute – Forsters and Neudorf

Feb 16 – Feb 19: Golden Bay / 3N (Thursday – Sunday)

Golden Bay Area: Wharariki Wild Beach, Pupu Springs + Hydrowalk, Cape Farewell Tour, Milnthorpe Park, The Grove, Labrynth, Rawhiti Cave, Wainui Falls, Takaka Hills caves, Kayak Tata Beach, etc

Ideas: see ideas below

Enroute – Ngarua Caves Hills, [GM route here](#)

Stay – [Kotare Muse](#) on VRBO. *Option 2 – on both [Airbnb](#) and [booking](#). [Option 3](#). [Option 4](#).*

Day Options -----

- [Anatoki Salmon](#). They provide rod and bait, catch for lunch, they will smoke on the spot. [Route](#)
- Te Waikoropupu Springs (7 min drive) and Hyrdo Walkway (12 min), then [The Grove](#) (“Jurassic Park w/o the dinosaurs”) and Wainui falls. Labrynth Rocks on return. [Route](#) 1½ hr round-trip
- Wharariki Wild Beach (1 hr) and [Cape Farewell Tour](#). In late summer/early autumn you'll see seal pups playing in the tide pools at low tide. Milnthorpe Park enroute/back.
- Rawhiti Cave (15 min drive, 6 miles, amazing rock and plants)
- Kayak at Tata Beach (20 min drive)

Feb 19 – Feb 26: Renwick 7N (Sunday – Sunday)

Renwick: Marlborough wineries and chill

Ideas: [Never Ending Journey](#)

Enroute – Cable Bay, Pelorus Bridge Scenic Reserve (barrel scenes from The Hobbit), Queen Charlotte Drive
Driving time is about 4½ hr plus stops, [GM route here](#).

2023 NZ Trip Itinerary

Stay – [Quaint Cottage on AirBnB](#)

Day -----

- There are 15 wineries within 3 miles of Renwick, so cycling is the way to go. [Wine Trail Map](#) is a good guide. Suggestions: Forrest, Bladen. Try lunch at one of the wineries. Recommended dinner – Arbour.
- Hike part of Queen Charlotte Sound. Bioluminescence at night (Mistletoe Bay at the pontoon or Lochmara Lodge near the boat shed?). Must be before moon rise, pitch dark. Jump in and swim?

Feb 26 – Feb 26: Ferry Picton to Wellington 0N (Sunday)

Enroute – n/a, drive 30 min, final check-in 1:15pm, so depart by noon [GM route here](#).

Ferry – 2:15 Picton – Wellington. 1 car, 2 adults, Ppd w/car rental

-

Feb 26 – March 01: Wellington 3N (Wednesday – Friday)

Wellington: Botanical Garden, Tram, Weta Workshop, Te Papa Museum, Mt Victoria lookout, restaurants

Ideas: Never Ending Voyage [Walks](#) and [What to Do in Wellington](#)

Enroute – n/a – ferry through Cook’s Strait. Driving time from ferry 10 min, [GM route here](#)

Stay – [Boulcott Suites](#) on booking

Day -----

- Arrive ~4pm from ferry (above), see city at Victoria Lookout and have dinner
- Weta Workshop , Tram to Botanical Garden
- Te Papa Museum, city walk restaurant

March 01 – March 03: Napier / Hawk’s Bay NP 2N (Wednesday – Friday)

Hawk’s Bay / Napier: Bike to wineries, Art Deco Napier, hike/drive Te Mata peak, Atrataka honey

Ideas: see below and wineries on the map

Enroute – Feilding, and wineries near Napier (see route). Driving time is 5hr plus stops, [GM route here](#)

Stay – [Bluff Hill - Napier](#) on VRBO

Day -----

- After drive - Napier Art Deco. Town Centre an area best suited to wander, roughly the area bounded by Tennyson, Hastings and Dickens Streets. iSite (information centre) is right on the Parade and at the top of the main street. Pick up a self-guided art deco brochure and wander. You can download here: <https://www.artdeconapier.com/shop/Tours/Downloadable+Self-Guided+Walks+Brochure.html>
- Day – hike (or drive) Te Mata for views, and self-guided [bike wineries](#), gannett colonies tour? Ahuriri area for dinner; it is the original port area, in use for that purpose until the 1931 earthquake. It is now interesting eating areas, shopping and apartments.

March 03 – March 05: Whakapapa / Tongariro NP 2N (Friday – Sunday)

Whakapapa / Tongariro NP: Hike [Tongariro Alpine Crossing](#) or [Taranaka Falls and Upper/Lower Tama Lakes](#)

Ideas: [Nomadic Matt](#), [EarthTrekks](#)

Enroute – Taupo for Craters of the Moon and Huka Falls. Driving time is 3½ hr, [GM route here](#)

Stay – [Chateau Tongariro Hotel](#)

Day -----

2023 NZ Trip Itinerary

- Arrive late after long drive Taupo.
- Day – hike [Tongariro Alpine Crossing](#) (one of best day-hikes in the world, 12 miles / 2800' elevation, smooth, one way, use a shuttle from [Tongariro Crossing Shuttles](#) or [Backyard Tours](#). Starts at hotel.
 - o There are toilets at the start: 20 minutes in and 1 hour in. You will then not cross another bathroom until 4 hours later on the descent to the finish line. Bring TP – there is none on trail
 - o Walk quickly to Mount Ngauruhoe. This is the first third of the trek with nothing really to see. Getting there quickly gives you more time to see the craters and take the side trails.
 - o Bring water – no refill spots. Also, layers (including gloves), as it can get chilly even in summer
 - o If you hike in the Mangatepopo to Ketetahi direction you'll start at 1120 meters above sea level and get 766 meters elevation gain and 1126 meters elevation loss.
- Or for a loop, [Taranaka Falls and Upper/Lower Tama Lakes](#), departs from our hotel. Also 11-12 mi, out and back, total of about 1800' gain

March 05 – March 07: New Plymouth / Egmont NP 2N (Sunday – Tuesday)

New Plymouth / Egmont NP: Back Beach (black sand), Te Rewa Rewa Bridge, bike path, hike Egmont NP
Ideas: [Never Ending Journey](#)

Enroute – tbd. Driving time is 4 hr, [GM route here](#)

Stay – [Wellborn Accomodation](#) on booking.com

Day -----

- Arrive late, see Te Rewa Rewa bridge, Back Beach, and maybe run New Plymouth Coastal Walkway.
- Day – hike Pouakai Circuit Reflective Tarn via Mangorei Trail Head

March 07 – March 10: Rotura 3N (Tuesday – Friday)

Rotura: Hobbiton, Hot Springs
Ideas: TBD

Enroute – Waimea Glow Worm Caves, possibly Marokopa Falls. Driving time is 4½ hr, [GM route here](#)

Stay – [Ramada Resort on booking.com](#)

Day -----

- Arrive late after long drive and glow-worms. Day 1 Hobbiton, Day 2 Hot Springs
- Wednesday March 8, 11:30am. Departs Shire's Rest, a 1 hr drive. [Route](#). [Reference](#)# 2585279 (printed)

March 10 – March 13: Hahei 3N (Friday – Monday)

Hahei: Cathedral Arch, Hot Water Beach, swim, relax
Ideas: [Never Ending Journey](#)

Enroute – Hobbiton if we have not see yet, driving time is 3½ hr, [GM Route 1 here](#).
If we've seen Hobbiton, go by Mt. Maungani and Whangamata Beach, 3½ hr [GM Route 2](#)

Stay – [Vacay Hahei](#) on booking.com

Day -----

- Hobbiton enroute, then Cathedral Arch, Hot Water Beach, swim, relax

March 13 – March 20: Russell 7N (Monday – Monday)

Russell: Swim, local hikes, relax
Ideas: [Bay if Islands](#) from Never Ending Journey

Enroute – TBD, check the [Motor Camps Map](#). Driving time is 6½ hr, [GM route here](#)

2023 NZ Trip Itinerary

Stay – [Paradise on Strand](#) on airbnb

Day -----

- Bay Cruise, Water Taxi to Urupukapuka Island for day hike, walk Flagstaff Hill, Long Beach, Tapeka Point Track

March 20 – March 21: Kauri Trees and stay in Dargaville 1N (Monday – Tuesday)

Dargaville: Just overnight. Sights are all enroute, then relax at motel

Ideas: TBD

Enroute – Rainbow Falls, Puketi Forest Kauri Walk, Tane Mahuta. Driving time is 4 hr, [GM route here](#)

Stay – [Hobson's Choice Motel](#) on booking.com

Day -----

- See sights enroute, no booking ahead required

March 21 – March 23: Auckland 2N (Tuesday – Thursday)

Auckland: Parks, [night markets](#), Waiheke Island ([Mudbrick Winery](#))

Ideas: [TA Forum](#), [Experience OZ](#)

Enroute – TBD, check the [Motor Camps Map](#) and nearby Auckland sites. Driving time 2½ hr, [GM route here](#)

Stay – [Four Points Sheraton](#)

Day -----

- **Confirm/cancel car for Hawaii (Turo or Thrifty)**
- Arrive, walk harbor and have dinner. Go to a [night market](#)
- Explore the city: Viaduct Harbour, Wynyard Quarter. Hike Mt Eden or One Tree Hill, Auckland Domain
- Ferry to Waiheke Island and lunch at [Mudbrick Winery](#) and walks on the island. **BOOK AHEAD!**

Mar 23 – Mar 23: Flight Auckland NZ to Kona, Hawaii 1N (Friday – Friday)

Transit - Uber or taxi

Flight - AKL-HNL | Auckland to Honolulu

Flight - HNL-KOA | Honolulu to Kona

Transit *either on-site at airport with rentalcars.com or car in long-term lot if Turo reservation, see below*

Mar 23 – Mar 24: Stay Volcano 1N (Thursday – Friday)

Volcano: Volcanoes National Park and Hike

CAR OPTIONS – I booked Turo and also rentalcars.com as a backup. Must cancel either 24hr prior for no fee

Car A – Turo Reservation with Lucy Arroyo.

Car B – Thrifty via rentalcars.

Enroute – tbd; see pins on GM. Driving time is about 2½hr, [GM route here](#).

Stay – [Kilauea Lodge](#) on booking.com

Day -----

- Morning Mar 24 - Volcanoes National Park Visitor's Center and hike – **need to research on AllTrails**

2023 NZ Trip Itinerary

Mar 24 – Mar 29: Pahoia, Hawaii 5N (Friday – Wednesday)

Pahoia: Visit black sand beaches, Mona Loa, Volcanoes National Park, whale watching boat excursion

Ideas: see google maps

Enroute – n/a. Driving time is about 1hr, [GM route here](#).

Stay – Bali-style Beach House – AirBnB

Mar 29 – Mar 30: Fly home to CLT (1N, Wednesday)

Enroute – **Plan on 3-4 hours drive, depart by 7:30am.** The fastest route via The Saddle (Hwy 200 / Daniel K. Inouye Highway) may be closed due to Mona Loa eruption), adding an additional hour of driving if the south route is needed. Drive time will also depend on drop location for Lucy (Turo) or rentalcars.com (Thrifty at KOA). Lucy may allow drop at airport for a fee.

- [Route to Thrifty via Saddle](#) (2½hr) and Route to [Thrifty South Route](#) (3½hr)
- [Route to Lucy's via Saddle](#) (2 ½hr + 30-min uber to KOA) and [South Route](#) (3hr plus uber)

Flight - KOA-LAX | Kona to Los Angeles

1 hour 10min connection

Flight - Los Angeles to Washington DC Dulles

1 hour 25min connection

Flight - IAD-CLT | Washington DC Dulles to Charlotte

Transit *taxi or uber*
