



— 2021 —

**NEW ZEALAND  
RAIL TOUR**

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# NEW ZEALAND RAIL TOUR



Tour Length: 11 Days | Tour Departs: 06 October 2021 | Tour Ends: 17 October 2021

## OVERVIEW:

Join us as we explore New Zealand by rail.

We begin our tour in Auckland where we climb aboard the Northern Explorer. Experience the extremes of New Zealand's scenery, from the fertile farmlands of Waikato to the volcanic peaks of the Central Plateau and the sparkling Kapiti coast. After two nights in the Capital City, we join the Interislander ferry service across the Cook Strait to Picton. It is considered one of the most beautiful ferry journeys in the world!

After an overnight stop in Blenheim, it is time for our next rail journey – the Coastal Pacific train which takes us along rugged coastlines, across remote beaches, between mountains and sea, on a timeless journey of breathtaking beauty.

We stay two nights in Christchurch before heading to Hanmer and then Hokitika for

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Two nights Chateau Tongariro including The Rail River Run tour with Forgotten World Adventures
- Wellington City Tour, including Weta Workshop & Zealandia tours
- Lunch at Wither Hills Winery
- Omaka Air Museum Blenheim
- Christchurch Gondola & Willowbank Wildlife Reserve
- Weka Pass Railway
- Hokitika Treetops Walkway

overnight stays prior to joining our final rail journey, the TranzAlpine. During our journey we'll see epic vistas, travel the edges of the ice-fed Waimakariri River, traverse the Southern Alps, and see miles of native beech forest.

We conclude the tour with another night in Christchurch.

## TOUR COSTS PER PERSON

Share Twin or Double Room  
NZD \$6,305

Supplement for Single Room  
NZD \$1,850

## TOUR COSTS INCLUDE:

- Rail travel in Scenic Class on Northern Explorer & TranzAlpine / Scenic Plus Class on Coastal Pacific
- Interislander Ferry, including Premium Lounge Access
- First Class hotel accommodation for city stays
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary – B= Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner
- Sightseeing and entrance fees as indicated in the itinerary
- Tips and gratuities to local guides, drivers, train staff etc.
- Deluxe air-conditioned coach transportation
- Baggage handling of one suitcase per person
- Services of a Maher Tours Leader

## TOUR COSTS EXCLUDE:

- Meals and sightseeing not specifically mentioned in the itinerary
- Travel insurance (assistance and advice offered)
- Items of a personal nature such as room service, telephone calls, laundry etc.

To register for this tour please contact us on 0800 500 518 or [tours@mahertours.co.nz](mailto:tours@mahertours.co.nz)





## DAY TO DAY ITINERARY

### Day 1 Arrive Auckland (D)

Meet the group today in Auckland. Tonight, we enjoy a welcome dinner together.

### Day 2 Auckland – Tongariro National Park (B,D)

This morning, we join New Zealand's longest running passenger service, the Northern Explorer. We head south via Papakura and Hamilton before reaching Otorohanga, our final stop before we reach Tongariro National Park.

We disembark early afternoon and make our way to our hotel for the next two nights, The Chateau Tongariro.



### Day 3 Tongariro National Park (B,L,D)

Today, we spend the day with Forgotten World Adventures, doing the The Rail River Run. Travelling along the first section of the Forgotten World Railway, between Okahukura & Tokorima, including the line's longest tunnel (Tunnel 24 - 1.5km long); combined with a Jet Boat journey along the scenic Whanganui River, between Cherry Grove (Taumarunui) & Ohinepāne.

Enjoy the best of both worlds, encountering 10 tunnels and 20 bridges, as you travel 40km by rail and 23km by Jet Boat on the Whanganui River, a mixture of nostalgia and adrenaline. Lunch and afternoon tea are included today.

### Day 4 Tongariro National Park – Wellington (B,D)

The morning is at leisure for you to enjoy the surroundings before we re-join the Northern Explorer train mid-afternoon. Travelling via Ohakune, Palmerston North & Paraparaumu, we arrive in Wellington just before 7.00pm. We are collected by coach and transferred to our hotel for the next two nights. We enjoy dinner together at the hotel this evening.

### Day 5 Wellington (B)

To quote a well-known company, Wellington is the Coolest Little Capital in the World. Famous for its food and coffee in various cafes and restaurants there is so much more to the Capital than that. We will tour some of the best attractions including Te Papa, Weta Workshop and Zealandia. The remainder of the day is at leisure.

### Day 6 Wellington – Picton – Blenheim (B,L)

This morning, we check out of our hotel and join the Interislander ferry service across the Cook Strait to Picton. It is considered one of the most beautiful ferry journeys in the



world and one of New Zealand's most iconic experiences. On arrival in Picton, we join our coach and make our way to Blenheim where we enjoy lunch at the Wither Hills winery – they take their name from the landmark Wither Hills range that borders their vineyards. At the conclusion, we transfer to our overnight accommodation. The rest of the evening is at leisure.



## DAY TO DAY ITINERARY

### Day 7 Blenheim – Christchurch (B,D)

After breakfast, we pay a visit to Omaka Air Museum, a world-class destination for the appreciation of historic aircraft. Not just for enthusiasts, the centre retells the story of aviation during two World Wars, the time in which the most intense period of aviation development took place. Here we have a chance to explore the Dangerous Skies WWII exhibition along with the famous Sir Peter Jackson's collection of WWI aircrafts & artefacts in his Knights of The Sky exhibition.

There is time for lunch before we climb aboard the Coastal Pacific, one of the most picturesque rail journeys in New Zealand, meandering along the Pacific coast between Blenheim and Christchurch. We travel along rugged coastlines, across remote beaches, between mountains and sea, on a timeless journey of breathtaking beauty.

We explore the stunning Kaikōura Coastline, famous for its marine life and whale watching. Voyage through the vineyards of Blenheim, dripping with New Zealand's premium crop. Canter amidst the idyllic Canterbury countryside to the Garden City of Christchurch.



We spend the journey in Scenic Class, which offers panoramic windows and an open-air viewing carriage.

drive east of Christchurch to Sumner Beach for lunch (own expense); an idyllic place to spend some time in the sun away from the centre of Christchurch.

On arrival in Christchurch, we are met by our coach and transferred to our hotel, the Sudima Christchurch City, where we spend the next two nights.

### Day 8 Christchurch (B)

Following breakfast this morning, we take a ride on the Christchurch Gondola to experience stunning 360° views of the city, Lyttelton Harbour and beyond from the summit station situated atop the Port Hills. At the conclusion of the Gondola ride, we take a short 20-minute

Returning to Christchurch, we visit the nearby Willowbank Wildlife Reserve, New Zealand's most comprehensive NZ themed wildlife park. Using pioneering and innovative display techniques, with an emphasis on creating a natural environment and an up-close and personal interactive experience, Willowbank showcases one of New Zealand's best displays of native species. Willowbank was the first to open a glass-free nocturnal house for kiwi in a natural environment, guaranteeing viewings every time.





## DAY TO DAY ITINERARY



### Day 9 Christchurch – Hanmer Springs (B,D)

Today we remember one of New Zealand's most tragic events with a morning tour of the Christchurch City rebuild. It has been nine years since the earthquake occurred in Christchurch on Tuesday 22 February 2011 and since this time, over 40 billion dollars has been invested into development to rebuild the once-vibrant city.

From here we drive to Glenmark, where we enjoy a leisurely train ride on The Weka Pass Railway through to Waikari. The Weka Pass

Railway is a historic rural railway using both vintage steam and diesel-electric locomotives through the unique limestone beauty of the Weka Pass out of Waipara, where superior weather patterns provide crystal clear air and high sunshine hours.

The railway runs across flat farmland and passes a large irrigation reservoir and vineyards, before climbing by 2%, winding through the Pass. One can only marvel at the achievements of the workers who in the 1880's moved tons of clay and limestone by hand to form all the cuttings and large embankments. Most notable are Frog Rock and Seal Rock, in the middle of

the Weka Pass. Seashells and fossils may be seen in the walls of many cuttings.

We rejoin our coach in Waikari and continue through to Hanmer Springs for an overnight stay, a picturesque alpine town best known for its natural hot pools and dazzling landscapes. There is time this afternoon to relax at the famous Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools. Every drop of thermal water is heated by Mother Nature and infused with minerals – a process that takes 173 years. Ease your aching muscles in the natural rock and Sulphur pools, while savoring the stunning backdrop.

### Day 10 Hanmer Springs – Greymouth – Hokitika (B,L,D)

Today our trip will take us through the red and silver beech forest as we leave Hanmer Springs before travelling through the Lewis Pass and onto the rugged natural beauty of the West Coast.

We stop en route to visit the Brunner Coal Mine Memorial Site to view the historic site of the 1896 disaster. When coal ruled, this was New Zealand's most important centre of industry,





## DAY TO DAY ITINERARY

and to this day the Brunner Mine explosion remains New Zealand's worst workplace accident. The disaster caught the attention of the whole nation and eventually led to improved workplace safety legislation and practices. Here at the Brunner Mine Site, we can walk through the industrial ruins and see some of the last remaining beehive coke ovens.

We arrive in Greymouth early afternoon and visit Monteith's Brewery to enjoy a tasting of the local produce over a delicious lunch. This brewery has been family owned since 1868 and are still brewing with the same traditions they used back then.

We rejoin our coach for the short stretch through to Hokitika, where we overnight.



### Day 11 Hokitika – Greymouth – Christchurch (B,D)

This morning, we visit Hokitika Gorge, a glacial river turquoise in colour surrounded by dramatic rock formations. A short walk descending through the hardwood forest leads to a swing bridge which crosses the Hokitika River and provides a postcard-worthy photo opportunity. We visit the famous Treetop Walkway, a thrilling treetop adventure among temperate rainforest giants. Experience life with the birds, high in the ancient Rimu and Kamahi tree canopy. Enjoy a leisurely walk along a steel platform 20 metres high and over 450 metres long and feel the adrenalin rush as you climb to the top of Hokitika Tower 40 metres above the forest floor.

Leaving Hokitika late morning, we travel back to Greymouth, where there is time for a lunch stop before we join the TranzAlpine train mid-afternoon for travel through to Christchurch. The TranzAlpine is one of the world's great train journeys covering 223 kilometres one-way, taking just under 5 hours. Along this journey you'll see epic vistas, travel the edges of the ice-fed Waimakariri River, traverse the mighty Southern Alps, and see miles of native beech forest. Arrival time in Christchurch is approx. 6.30pm.

On arrival in Christchurch, we are met and transferred to our hotel. We enjoy our final dinner together this evening.

### Day 12 Christchurch – Home (B)

Sadly, all good things must come to an end and it is time to bid your fellow tour members farewell. Travellers will be transferred to the Christchurch Airport domestic terminal, to join their return flights home.





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