



Hidden Gems of the North

Classic Tour | 11 Days | Physical Level 2

Wellington – New Plymouth – Tongariro National Park – Napier – Taupo
– Hamilton – Auckland

Experience some of the North Island's lovely hidden gems on one of our exciting new Wendy Wu 'Local Edition' tours. Start with the capital city's fascinating Weta Workshop and tranquil Zealandia Ecosanctuary, then travel north by luxury coach to take in the beautiful vistas of Taranaki and New Plymouth. Head over to Tongariro National Park for a scenic gondola ride on the new Sky Waka. An art deco experience in Napier follows, with a visit to one of the wonderful Hawke's Bay wineries. Explore the stunning and unique Hamilton Gardens, and visit the Zealong Tea Estate for lunch. Finish in Auckland with an Asian cooking class at Sachie's Kitchen. Everything's included – transport, accommodation, meals and a fun sociable group of like-minded travellers, all keen to experience the scenic beauty of New Zealand's North Island.

- Weta Workshop
- Zealandia Ecosanctuary
- Pukeiti Gardens
- Govett-Brewster Art Gallery
- Huka Falls & National Trout Centre
- Ruapehu's new Sky Waka Gondola
- Napier Art Deco Vintage Car Tour
- Hawkes's Bay Winery
- Hobbiton & Zealong Tea Estate



Hidden Gems of the North tour inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals (From dinner on day 1 to breakfast on the last day)
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, early check in or late check out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

Classic Tour:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of New Zealand on an excellent value group tour travelling with like-minded people. The tours are on a fully inclusive basis so you will travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by

our dedicated and professional National Escort and local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

Physical Level 2:

All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights. 'Hidden Gems of the North' is rated 2 on the physical level scale. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it's more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You'll be getting on and off coaches and boats, walking around the sights and climbing some steps.

Of course, our National Escorts and local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary. If you require any more information about the pace of our tours, please contact our reservations team who will be happy to answer your questions.

Country Profile: New Zealand

New Zealand located just 3 hours by air from the east coast of Australia and home to magnificent landscapes, towering mountain ranges, stunning beaches, unique wildlife, and friendly laid-back locals. Comprising of two islands – North and South with both offering unique and different experiences.

Joining Your Tour

The tour is 11 days in duration including international flights. Travellers booked on 'Land Only', the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to reservations.

Join the tour on Day 1 in Wellington and end the tour on Day 11 in Auckland. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

Itinerary Changes

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip.

Itinerary – Hidden Gems of the North

Day 1: Wellington

Fly to Wellington, the capital of New Zealand. On arrival, transfer to your hotel. After a welcome briefing, take a stroll to Courtney Place for a welcome dinner in the dining and entertainment hub of Wellington



Destination Information

Wellington – Located in the southern end of the North Island. A compact city with a mix of culture, history, nature, and cuisine. It's not only the capitol of the country but also the capital of the film industry and also home to over 55 galleries and museums.

Day 2: Weta Workshop & Zealandia Ecosanctuary

After breakfast head to Weta Workshop, the award-winning design studio that has created special effects for many blockbuster movies such as Lord of the Rings and Avatar. Our private tour will unlock some of the movie magic!

Afterwards it's a short drive to the tranquil urban forests of Zealandia Ecosanctuary for lunch and some time to enjoy a scenic walk. The Ecosanctuary is home to a huge variety of native birds and you may even spot a tuatara in the wild! On our way back to the hotel, you will have the option of being dropped off at the Botanical Gardens, for those who want to experience the Cable Car ride down to the city centre (at own expense). Dinner tonight will include a chance to taste some famous Wellington microbrewery beers.



Destination Information

Weta Workshop – Located in the southern end of the North Island. A compact city with a mix of culture, history, nature and cuisine. It's not only the capitol of the country but also the capital of the film industry and also home to over 55 galleries and museums.

Day 3: Wellington – New Plymouth

Leaving Wellington, travel north along the west coast, stopping for a tour of the iconic Foxton Windmill, a full-size replica traditional 17th century Dutch flour mill.

Our next stop will be the amazing Tawhiti Museum, widely acclaimed as the best private museum in the country. The creation of artist Nigel Ogle, the museum uses life size exhibits and minutely detailed historical dioramas to present our heritage in a series of engaging displays. Enjoy lunch in the museum's Wind in the Willows-themed café and a tour of the museum. Later this afternoon, arrive at our accommodation in New Plymouth with time for a stroll along the impressive waterfront before dinner.



Destination Information

Foxton Windmill – A little bit of the Netherlands in New Zealand. Completed in 2003 and today operating as a non-profit organisation for visitors to experience the iconic windmill and its produce and as a monument to all the Dutch immigrants in New Zealand.

Tawhiti Museum - First started as a hobby and now is regarded as one of the best private museums in New Zealand. Showcasing an impressive and engaging history of Taranaki.

Day 4: New Plymouth – Pukeiti Gardens & Govett – Brewster Art Gallery

After breakfast this morning, take an optional bike ride along the beautiful coastal cycleway to Te Rewa Bridge to meet our coach. If you do not cycle, you can opt for a scenic waterfront walk at the Bridge, a New Plymouth landmark that is reminiscent of a whale skeleton or a breaking wave. Drive to the famous Pukeiti Gardens at the foot of Mt Taranaki, for lunch in the Founders Café and a tour of the rhododendrons and exotics garden.

This afternoon drive back to New Plymouth to visit the architecturally stunning Govett- Brewster Gallery, that celebrates the extraordinary work of Len Lye, modernist filmmaker and kinetic artist.



Destination Information

Pukeiti Rainforest & Gardens – A 360-hectare rainforest park located at the base of Mt Taranaki., internationally renowned for its outstanding rhododendron collection which covers over 27 hectares.

Govett- Brewster Gallery – Opened in 1970, it has become New Zealand’s contemporary art museum and renowned internationally. It was also the first venue to display Len Lye’s work anywhere in the world back in 1977 and was chosen by Len Lye to be the home of his work and vision.

Day 5: New Plymouth to Lake Taupo

Relax and enjoy a scenic drive through some of the most untouched parts of New Zealand. Our first stop will be for a unique lunch and alpaca experience at Nevelea Alpacas, nestled in the hills of the King Country on the adventure highway. Before arriving at our hotel in Taupo this afternoon, we will stop and take a short walk to the magnificent Huka Falls where more than 220,000 litres of water per second barrel over an 11 m high waterfall. Dinner tonight will be in Taupo itself.



Destination Information

Nevelea Alpacas – This is the largest alpaca farm in New Zealand and is home to over 950 friendly alpacas. Alpacas have been valued for their soft luxurious fleeces for generations, their fleece has been called ‘the fibre of the gods’. At one time, South Americans also used their fleeces as a form of currency

Taupo – A town in the central part of the North Island which sits adjacent to the vast waters of the Lake Taupo, an old volcanic caldera. Water based activities, such as trout fishing and jetboating, are popular – as well as volcanic hot springs and other natural wonders.

Huka Falls – Hear the falls before you see them as the sound is from 220,000 litres of water per sec barrelling over an 11m high waterfall after travelling north from Lake Taupo between banks 110m apart before it enters a shallow ravine of hard volcanic rock into New Zealand’s longest river – the Waikato River.

Day 6: Tongariro National Park

On our drive to Tongariro National Park this morning, we will make a stop at the National Trout Centre - a fascinating museum, aquarium, and hatchery near Turangi. Afterward, we will continue on our journey into the National Park and ascend Mt Ruapehu on the new Sky Waka, New Zealand's largest gondola, enjoying the panoramic views of its three volcanos.



Lunch will be at the Knoll Ridge Chalet - New Zealand's highest dining experience. Later this afternoon, enjoy some free time back at the hotel (perhaps in the pool!) before heading to dinner in the township of Taupo again.

Destination Information

Tongariro National Park – Home to New Zealand's most dramatic landscapes and centred around three volcanoes – Tongariro, Ngauruhoe and Ruapehu. Became a National Park back in 1877 and is a UNESCO World Heritage for its cultural significance to the Maori people and stunning natural features.

National Trout Centre – Learn about the history of Trout and Fly fishing on the Tongariro River, one of the best fishing rivers in the world. View one of NZ's best collections of native freshwater fish in the Aquarium and walk through the working trout hatchery with up to 16000 baby trout or "trout fry" in residence.

Sky Waka - Ride 1.8 kms through the sky on the most advanced gondola in NZ, with floor to ceiling, 360 degrees views. Journey over waterfalls and ancient lava flows and take in the majestic scenery of Mt Ruapehu and it's neighbouring volcanoes, Ngauruhoe and Tongariro.

Day 7: Art Deco Napier & Vineyard Dinner

After breakfast, take a scenic drive to Napier to enjoy an Art Deco Highlights Vintage Car Tour. Head to Havelock North for lunch at the picturesque Birdwoods Gallery with time to stroll their sculpture garden and enjoy a browse through their unique store. After checking into your hotel this afternoon, there will be time for a stroll around the pretty town of Havelock North. Dinner tonight will be at a stunning local winery.



Destination Information

Napier – Located on the east coast of the North Island in Hawke’s Bay. Renowned for its stunning 1930’s beautifully restored Art-Deco buildings. The commercial centre of the city was destroyed by a massive earthquake in 1931 that claimed 260 lives and the rebuilding was commenced almost immediately.

Day 8: Napier - Hamilton

On our journey to Hamilton today, we will stop and explore one of the best thermal reserves in New Zealand, Orakei Korako. Before lunch at their lakefront café, we will take a short boat ride across the lake to explore the thermal park itself. Dinner tonight will be in the city, walking distance from our hotel.



Destination Information

Hamilton – Nestled on the banks of the mighty Waikato River, renowned for its walks, gardens, and cafes. It’s also a destination for national and international events from sporting (rugby, netball, rowing) to concerts and festivals.

Orakei Korako Geothermal Park – A boat- accessible geothermal area featuring geysers, hot springs and mud pools, as well as a riverside café. Also known as ‘Hidden Valley’, the park area is highly active and a must-see attraction.

Day 9: Waikato: Hamilton Gardens & Hobbiton

Explore the wonderful themed gardens at the award-winning Hamilton Gardens, including their recently completed surrealist garden. Lunch will be at New Zealand’s premier tea plantation, Zealong Tea Estate in their luxuriously appointed restaurant. This afternoon, visit the ‘enchanted village of Hobbiton’ – one of the locations used in the Lord of the Rings trilogy. Dinner tonight is back in Hamilton.



Destination Information

Hamilton Gardens – A stunning venue that is unlike any gardens found elsewhere. There are five garden collections spread over 58 hectares. It is home to Te Parapara – New Zealand’s first traditional Maori garden; Paradise Garden Collection representing gardens from China, England, Japan, America, Italy and India; the Productive Garden showcasing their useful function; the Cultivar Garden Collection tells stories of plants that have been selectively bred for the garden and lastly the Fantasy Garden, where the imagination has run riot.

Zealong Tea Estate – New Zealand’s only commercial tea estate producing 100% organic award winning tea.

Hobbiton – Experience Middle Earth with a visit to Hobbiton located on a stunning 1,250 acre sheep farm in the heart of the Waikato.

Day 10: Auckland: Fo Guang Temple & Cooking Lesson

Our last day of touring takes us up to Auckland, where we will stop at the tranquil Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Temple, located in Flat Bush. Designed in the architectural style of the Tang Dynasty, the temple is one of Auckland’s hidden gems. Head over to Half Moon Bay marina for lunch before we board our ferry to Auckland. After checking into our Auckland hotel, this evening enjoy a farewell dinner that we will all be cooking at Sachie’s Kitchen, famous for their award-winning Asian cooking classes.



Destination Information

Auckland - New Zealand’s largest and multi-cultural city. Sprawled over volcanic hills and surrounded by two harbours, it’s a backdrop to a range of activities on offer from nature and outdoors to food, wine and shopping.

Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Temple – The largest Buddhist temple in New Zealand and home to a large Buddha statue and two-tonne bell.

Day 11: Depart Auckland

This morning is free at leisure before you transfer to Auckland Airport for your return flight home.

Please note: Only breakfast is included today. Late check-out is not included in our Hidden Gems of the North tour. If you wish to book a late check-out for your final day in Auckland, please contact our reservations department who can confirm the additional price and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.

Hidden Gems of the North Travel Information

Visas

Passports must be valid for six months beyond the length of stay. Visas are not required for Australian passport holders for entry into New Zealand.

Insurance

We strongly encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents with them while on tour. Wendy Wu Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

Accommodation

Your accommodation has been selected for convenience of location, comfort or character. Hotels are generally rated as local 4 star standards. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

Porterage

Please be aware that porterage is not included on our tours in New Zealand. You will therefore need to be able to handle your own luggage within the hotel and when using transportation.

Transport

Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Please note that it may not always be possible to return to your hotel after sightseeing to freshen up before going to the restaurant for dinner.

Group Size

The group size for our Wendy Wu New Zealand tours will be no more 20 travellers in each group. All of our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 14 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so.

Packing list and Climate

Weather patterns can be quite unpredictable. Up to the minute information on worldwide weather can be found on www.weather.com

Luggage

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each: a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

Exchanging Cash

New Zealand's unit of currency is the dollar (NZ\$). All major credit cards can be used in New Zealand, with Visa and Mastercard accepted most widely. Australian Dollars can be exchanged prior to departure from Australia or on arrival at Wellington Airport at banks, some hotels and Bureau de Change kiosks. ATMs are widely available at banks, along main shopping streets and in malls. International credit cards and ATM cards will work as long as they have a four-digit PIN encoded. Check with your bank before leaving home.

Personal Expenses & Optional Tours

Personal Expense - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of AU\$250 per person, per week should be sufficient; however, for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional Tours - May be offered in each city you visit during your tour. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits and if seats are available. In your Final Documentation an Optional Excursion Sheet will be included outlining the activities available in each city and local cost associated.

Please ensure you have additional funds available if you feel you may wish to participate in any extra activities. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion

Vaccinations and Your Health

We recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.travelvax.com.au

Before You Leave

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.smartraveller.gov.au as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service up to date information about your destination on the same website.

After your booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

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To book call **1300 727 998** or visit your local travel agent

Visit wendywutours.com.au