

North Island Volcanic Adventure ★ 4.25 1 Reviews

North Island Volcanic Adventure

5 Days

14 People Max



Lose track of time as you explore New Zealand's diverse North Island, from rolling green hills to the volcanic landscapes and endless coastlines on our North Island Volcanic Adventure.

The North Island of New Zealand is packed to the brim with incredible landscapes, and there's no better way to experience its vastness than on our North Island Volcanic Adventure. Discover for yourself your favorite part of the island as you hike the renowned Tongariro Alpine Crossing, bike through redwood forests, and walk through otherworldly caves lit by the mysterious glowworm. With two local guides and every detail looked after, you'll learn about the intimate Maori culture and visit spiritual Kauri forests without a worry in the world. Our year-round North Island Volcanic Adventure is the perfect addition to any of our South Island trips. Starting and finishing in Auckland, all you'll need to do is walk off the plane, and you'll be off on a hiking tour of a lifetime!

Trip Highlights

Hiking - Tongariro Alpine Crossing

Hiking - Rotorua's lakes

Biking - Whakarewarewa Forest

Plus ... - Maori culture

Plus ... - Waitomo Caves

Tongariro National Park Hike options

Option A: Taranaki Falls & Silica Rapids

The Taranaki Falls and Silica Rapids hikes showcase a variety of flora from native beech forest to sub-alpine shrublands, each culminating with a spectacular view; Taranaki Falls is 20 meters (65 feet) high and Silica Rapids has water cascading down a series of creamy white

terraces.

Option B: Tongariro Alpine Crossing

Tongariro Alpine Crossing is a full-day hike that is challenging and unforgettable! The trail takes you through arid volcanic terrain that includes emerald lakes, cold mountain springs, lava flows, active craters, and steam vents – it's unlike anything else in New Zealand. The Tongariro Alpine Crossing is a more challenging hike in winter (from May until October) with alpine conditions such as snow and ice.

Our Active Adventures Assurance

We value loyalty, and appreciate that it goes both ways. So when you book with us we'll make a few assurances to you so you can book with complete confidence, no matter what's happening in your life (or the world).



COVID-Ready Certified: Safe Travel for our Guests Travelling Overseas

Active Adventures has received the World Travel and Tourism Council's Safe Travels stamp, which guarantees you that we'll follow all ATTA and WTTC health and safety guidelines on all our trips. See how our small group, off-the-beaten-track adventures are perfect to start exploring again.

North Island Volcanic Adventure ~ Itinerary

DAY 1

Pick-up, visit Te Aroha, hike to Wairere Waterfall

We'll pick you up from your hotel or the airport and, leaving the city behind us, drive south to the township of Te Aroha. The town is one of the country's top tourist spots, celebrated for its naturally hot soda waters and Mokena geyser. Today's hike winds its way amongst tree roots and mossy rocks, and across several bridged river crossings to a lookout platform at the base of the Wairere Falls on the Okauia fault line. Afterwards, we'll drive to Rotorua, considered the heartland of New Zealand's Maori culture and the spiritual home of New Zealand's tangata whenua (original people of the land).

Sudima Hotel, Rotorua (Lunch, Dinner)

Hiking: 5 kilometers (3 miles), 3-4 hours, elevation +/- 400 meters (1,312 feet)

DAY 2

Mountain bike Whakarewarewa Forest, visit Te Puia

This morning, we'll head out to cycle the trails of Whakarewarewa Forest. Cycling in the forest is a real highlight of the trip and we have options to suit all abilities. If you prefer not to cycle, you can stay and soak in the local mineral spas, or explore Rotorua. After a picnic lunch in the forest, we'll visit Te Puia which is famed for the Te Whakarewarewa geothermal valley - a place of gushing waters, steaming vents, boiling mud pools, and impressive geysers. Tonight you'll enjoy a cultural performance by members of the Te Arawa tribe and share a traditional feast. A hangi, as it's known, is prepared by wrapping food and burying it in the earth to cook over hot stones. This healthy cooking method is similar to steaming and imparts a wonderful flavor.

Sudima Hotel, Rotorua (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Biking: 2-8 kilometers (1.5-5 miles), +/-20 meters (65 feet), 3 hours including bike fitting & bike briefing and depending on ability and preferences

DAY 3

Hike Rainbow Mountain, hike to Huka Falls

We head south out of Rotorua today to hike Rainbow Mountain, aptly named due to the unusual color of the soil. We'll head up through the native forest past an impressive crater lake for panoramic views over the volcanic plateau. Then after lunch, we'll follow the track along New Zealand's longest river, the Waikato, for a spectacular view of Huka Falls and maybe a dip in some natural hot springs. Traveling further south, we follow the shores of Lake Taupo, an enormous volcanic caldera and the site of the world's largest eruption in the last 70,000 years. We'll stay on the banks of the Tongariro River, New Zealand's most famous trout fishing river.

Creel Lodge, Turangi (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Hiking: Rainbow Mountain Hike: 5 kilometers (3 miles), 3 hours. elevation +/- 340 meters (1,115 feet)

Hiking: Huka Falls Hike: 3 kilometers (2 miles), 1 hour, elevation +/- 20 meters (65 feet)

DAY 4

Hike Tongariro National Park, soak in hot pools

Just south of Turangi are three massive volcanoes (Tongariro, Ngauruhoe and Ruapehu) – located in Tongariro National Park, New Zealand’s oldest national park and the fifth oldest in the world. Today we’ll hike to the Taranaki Falls and Silica Rapids around the base of Mount Ruapehu, both of these hikes showcase a variety of flora from native beech forest to sub-alpine shrublands, each culminating with a spectacular view; Taranaki Falls is 20 meters (65 feet) high and Silica Rapids has water cascading down a series of creamy white terraces. For more experienced hikers, we have the option to complete the Tongariro Alpine Crossing and this full-day hike is challenging and unforgettable! The trail takes you through arid volcanic terrain that includes emerald lakes, cold mountain springs, lava flows, active craters, and steam vents – it’s unlike anything else in New Zealand. The Tongariro Alpine Crossing is a more challenging hike in winter (from May until October) with alpine conditions such as snow and ice, and if the weather isn’t suitable for the crossing, we’ll all hike the Taranaki Falls and Silica Rapids. Your option must be confirmed at time of booking. Tonight, you can bathe in some natural thermal springs before having a celebratory dinner for our last night together.

Creel Lodge, Turangi (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Hiking: Tongariro Crossing: 20 kilometers (12 miles), 7-8 hours, elevation +/- 1,000 meters (3,280 feet)

Hiking: Taranaki Falls: 6 kilometers (3.7 miles), 2 hours, elevation +/- 120 meters (393 feet)

Hiking: Silica Rapids: 7 kilometers (4.3 miles), 2-3 hours, elevation +/- 220 meters (721 feet)

DAY 5

Visit Waitomo Caves, depart for home

For our last day together, we’ll head to the spectacular Waitomo Caves for a morning of caving. For those keen, you’ll head down to explore an underground cave system. You’ll be fitted with a wetsuit, helmet, headlamp and rubber tube in order to float down a subterranean stream, slide down waterfalls and at one point, switch off your headlamp to check out the incredible glowworms that live on the limestone ceiling of the cave. A shower and some hot soup complete the picture. Alternatively, take in the subterranean beauty on foot with a guided walk through Ruakuri cave system where you’ll learn all about the geological significance of the area. Afterward, we’ll head back to Auckland where your trip finishes. We’ll have you at the airport in time to catch evening flights back home, or down south for one of our South Island trips.

No Accommodation (Breakfast, Lunch)

Useful Info

Is tipping expected in New Zealand?

Tipping is neither required nor routinely expected in New Zealand, but it is appropriate for very good service. In New Zealand you don't usually tip in restaurants, or if you take a taxi, or get a haircut. Many of our guests do choose to tip our guides and we recommend USD\$20 per day, per guest, per guide. You are welcome to tip an equivalent amount in the local currency. There are plenty of ATM's and banks in the larger towns of New Zealand.

What additional activities are on offer in New Zealand?

You'll be participating in loads of amazing activities during your tour, however, you may be wondering what other cool stuff you can do before or after your trip to make the most of your time in New Zealand.

We've teamed up with the good folk at Everything Travel and you're welcome to book any pre or post-trip 'things to do' directly with them.

For trips starting and/or ending in the South Island, check out things to do before and/or after your trip [here](#).

For trips starting and/or ending in North Island, check out things to do before and/or after your trip [here](#).

Make sure any activities you book are before or after your trip only as your tour itself is already filled to the brim with the adventures we offer!

Where does the trip start?

On the first morning of the trip, our three pick-up locations are the [Sudima Auckland City Hotel](#) in Auckland central at 8:15am, Auckland International Airport Terminal (AKL) at the Help Desk directly opposite international arrivals at 9am, or the Auckland Domestic Airport Terminal (AKL) directly outside Door #2 at 9.15am. You are welcome to book your pre-trip stay at this hotel directly or any other hotel in Auckland, though you must make your own way to one of the two pick-up points at the pre-designated times.

Where does the trip end?

Your trip ends with a drop-off at either the Auckland Airport (AKL) in time for flights below or the Sudima Auckland City Hotel in the late afternoon/early evening.

What flights would you recommend?

Arrival: We recommend arriving in Auckland by 7am. Many guests like to arrive a day or two early to accommodate potential flight delays and/or explore the city prior to your trip start.

Departure: Flying out on the last day of the trip, we recommend departing from Auckland after 7pm domestic and 8pm international flight departures. Earlier flight times will require a separate transfer booked at your own expense.

How much luggage can I bring on this trip?

You are allowed one piece of luggage on your trip, plus a daypack. Your main piece of luggage should not exceed 50 pounds (23 kilograms) and can be anything from a duffle bag to a sports bag with wheels or a suitcase. You'll also want a good quality backpack sized 25-30 liters (2000 cubic inches) to use throughout the days.

Tell me about the Tongariro Alpine Crossing?

The Tongariro Alpine Crossing is often referred to as New Zealand's best mountain day-hike. It's a long day hike with a few up hills and a long, gradual downhill at the end. Starting with a gradual uphill walk, you'll then climb a ridge and traverse over a spectacular moonlike landscape, passing the stunning Emerald Lakes and nearby volcanic features. Good hiking boots are a must as the track, although well marked, has a couple of ridges to climb along and down. There are a few steps too, so it's a really good idea to have some hiking poles, whether you share between two or use both of them, you'll be very glad to have them with you. If you're booked to come during our winter months from May through to October, you have the option of either hiking the Tongariro Alpine Crossing, or some fabulous lower elevation hikes in the Tongariro National Park.

Winter Alpine crossing of Mt Tongariro

Mt. Tongariro and the Tongariro Alpine Crossing is at this time of the year is typically covered in snow and ice. If you're keen, and fit - and the weather is suitable, you can still hike over the Tongariro Alpine Crossing. It's a full day out, and we'll provide all the gear, such as crampons, ice axes and a specialist guide this day.

Winter hiking Tongariro National Park

Tongariro National Park has many other hiking trails to explore, a couple of which are the Taranaki Falls waterfall hike, and the terraces of the Silica Rapids. These tracks are away from the higher elevations of snow and ice and are fabulous hiking alternatives for this day!

Tell me about the Waitomo Caves options?

When we visit Waitomo we have two ways to experience these fabulous caves - either wet or dry! Wet option you'll be floating along through an underground river on an innertube (wearing all the appropriate gear of course), and dry means you can walk through a nearby cave instead. With both options you'll see limestone formations and masses of glow-worms.

Cave Tubing at Waitomo (wet)

Waitomo is renowned for its caves and what an awesome way to experience this region by really getting in it! We'll provide all the gear, such as a head-lamp, helmet, wet-suit and rubber tubes, along with and a specialist guide this day and head off on a subterranean adventure through the Ruakuri Caves. You'll take leaps of faith over cascading waterfalls, and float serenely down an underground river as you enjoy the glow-worms above you (enjoy lovely hot showers and hot soup after!)

Walking Ruakuri Caves (dry)

A dry option today is wandering through the Ruakuri Cave at Waitomo. Journey down through the spectacular spiral entrance, and see shawl-like limestone formations, crystal tapestries, stalactites & stalagmites - as well as glowworms.

How do rooming arrangements work?

Trip prices are based on shared arrangements (typically two guests per room), unless otherwise stated. For solo travelers, we'll pair you with another person of the same gender to share rooms and if there's no one suitable to share with, there's no forced single supplement. However, if you specifically request your own rooms, you can opt to pay the single supplement. Solo travelers who book within 90 days of departure, where there are no other solo travelers willing to share, will be required to pay the single supplement.

For Family Vacation bookings, families consisting of four guests traveling with children aged 17 and under will be automatically assigned one shared room. However, the following alternative rooming allocations are available:

Families consisting of four guests with all children aged 13 and above are welcome to opt for additional rooms as per advertised double occupancy adult rates.

Families consisting of four guests with at least one child aged 12 and under are automatically assigned a shared room. However, families can opt to pay the adult rates for all guests in their family to have an additional room.

The same principles apply for families consisting of more than four guests.

Rooming preferences are subject to availability and must be communicated in writing at time of booking. Automatic assignments as per this policy will be applied in the absence of any specification provided by guests. Any request for additional rooms during trips will be at guests' own expense and subject to rates made available by the accommodation provider at the time. All minors (guests aged 17 and under) must be accompanied by at least one adult.

What is not included?

Flights to and from trip start/end points

15% NZ Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Pre/Post Accommodation

Optional extra activities

Travel insurance

Gratuities for your guides

Trekking packs and sleeping bags (if applicable)

General Trip Information

You can find details on recommended flights and fitness, as well as trip start and end in the 'Useful Information' section above.

Accommodation

You'll love the interesting places we've discovered over the years. You'll visit really spectacular and off-the-beaten-track locations and stay in comfortable bed and breakfasts, lodges, apartments and hotels for the most part. Keep in mind the most remote locations have limited accommodation options, but 5-star scenery!

Included

- Our own highly experienced guides, driver, and cook, with you from start to finish
- Industry-leading Guest-to-Guide ratio (averaging 6:1)
- Your own 'Travel Wallet', an online space with everything required for your adventure
- Our knowledgeable Customer Service Team to answer your queries - just a phone call, email or chat away
- Customer Service pre-trip phone calls to ensure you're 'trip ready'
- All accommodations for the duration of your trip
- All meals except where indicated in the itinerary
- Unlimited snacks to keep you fueled
- All activities outlined in the itinerary
- All necessary equipment (well-maintained and safe) for activities, including Hiking Poles
- All park and other entry fees
- Transportation in our air-conditioned vans - safe, clean, modern, and comfortable!

Itinerary Updates

We update our itineraries regularly, so please check our website for the most up-to-date itineraries and pricing. We make every effort to ensure itineraries are updated as necessary, though changes may occur without prior notice due to unforeseen circumstances.

Transportation

Since New Zealand isn't quite small enough to simply walk everywhere and still see all the highlights in a limited amount of time, we travel in fuel-efficient 20-seat Toyota Coasters and our guides make the journey enjoyable. They'll introduce you to some local tunes as well as provide interesting commentary, and we pass the time on the road in a fun, social way, with New Zealand's ever-changing scenery providing a feast for the eyes. Our focus, as always, is getting you out of the vehicle and into the scenery.

Excluded

- International/Domestic Flights to and from the meeting point
- 15% NZ Goods and Services Tax (GST)
- Optional extra activities
- Travel insurance
- Alcoholic beverages
- Gear on packing list (optional to rent some equipment)
- Gratuities for your guides at the end of your fabulous trip

Outdoor Experience

Our trips allow you to make the most of the New Zealand backcountry, whether you're relatively new to hiking or a seasoned trekker. Our highly trained and experienced guides will be at your side, safely guiding you to magnificent places that you wouldn't get to on your own. The challenges are there, if you're looking for them. All we ask is that you're energetic and in reasonable shape and we guarantee you'll have an incredible time. You don't need to have kayaked before to enjoy paddling on the water and you don't need to be a serious cyclist to enjoy most of the rides we do. In fact, we have so many options available that you don't need to paddle or ride at all if you'd rather hike or just laze around!

We hold all relevant government licenses and permits, have an impeccable safety record, and are certified by [OutdoorsMark](#), New Zealand's leading outdoor safety auditors. So, with all the research, logistics, safety and hospitality taken care of, you can focus on the most important thing - making the most of your adventure!