



# Hidden Gems of the North

## AN 11 DAY TOUR OF THE NORTH ISLAND'S UNIQUE AND HIDDEN GEMS

Experience some of the North Island's lovely hidden gems on one of our exciting new Wendy Wu 'NZ Edition' tours. Start with the capital city's fascinating Weta studios and tranquil Zealandia ecosanctuary and 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 mountain 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. 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 Australians, all keen to experience the scenic beauty of our neighbours North Island.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Weta Workshop
- Zealandia Ecosanctuary
- Pukeiti Gardens
- Govett – Brewster Art Gallery
- Huka Falls & National Trout Centre
- Ruapehu's new Sky Waka
- Napier Art Deco Vintage Car tour
- Hawke's Bay winery
- Hobbiton and Zealong Tea Estate



## ITINERARY

### Day 1 – Arrive in Wellington

Depart Australia for New Zealand's vibrant capital Wellington. 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.

Meals – Dinner



### Day 2 – Wellington: 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.



Meals – Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

### Day 3 – Wellington to New Plymouth: Foxton Windmill & Tawhiti Museum

Leaving Wellington, travel north along the west coast, stopping for a tour of the iconic Foxton Windmill, a full-size replica traditional 17<sup>th</sup> 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.

Meals – Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner





#### Day 4 – New Plymouth: Pukeiti Rhododendron Gardens & Len Lye 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.



Meals – Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

#### 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.



Meals – Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

#### 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.



Meals – Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

### Day 7 – Taupo – Napier / Havelock North

After an early breakfast, take a scenic drive to Napier where you will enjoy an Art Deco Vintage Car Tour of the city plus some free time to wander round the waterfront, botanical gardens and boutique shops. We will head to Havelock North for lunch at the picturesque Birdwoods Gallery & Café whilst also ensuring there is enough time for a stroll through their sculpture garden and a browse through their unique store. After checking into your hotel later this afternoon, there will be time for a wander around the charming village of Havelock North. Dinner tonight will be at a stunning local winery.



Meals – Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner



### Day 8 – Napier / Havelock North - 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..

Meals – Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

### Day 9 – Hamilton Gardens, Zealong & Hobbiton

Explore the 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 we will visit the enchanting village of Hobbiton – one of the locations used in the Lord of the Rings trilogy. Dinner tonight is back in Hamilton.

Meals – Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner



### Day 10 – Hamilton to Auckland

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 CBD hotel, enjoy a farewell dinner that we will cook ourselves at Sachie's Kitchen, famous for their award-winning Asian cooking classes.

Meals – Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

### Day 11 – Auckland

After breakfast, your tour ends, and we will transfer you back to Auckland Airport for your flight to Australia.

## Hidden Gems of the North – Travel Information

### TOUR INCLUSIONS

- International Flights
- All meals and accommodation (3.5-4+ star)
- All transportation and transfers
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- National Escort

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions, insurance of any kind, and early check in or late check out.

### PHYSICAL FITNESS – LEVEL 2

To travel on any of our tours requires a reasonable level of fitness, 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 steps. Our National Escort 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 the tours, please contact our reservations team who will be happy to answer your questions.

### 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 local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip. Please note for passengers traveling in March of 2022 accommodation will be in Rotorua instead of Hamilton, all other touring will remain the same.

### 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 3 to 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.

### 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 Tours Local Edition tours will be no more 22 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.

### LUGGAGE

All travelers 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 7 kilograms. It is advisable that your luggage is lockable.

### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Any optional activities offered on tour will be at additional cost, to be paid locally.

### AFTER YOUR BOOKING

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation. Your final payment will be due 45 days before departure. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

**Last updated: June 2021**