



# NEW ZEALAND

TOP SIGHTS, AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCES

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## Welcome to New Zealand

*Get ready for mammoth national parks, dynamic Māori culture, and world-class mountain biking, surfing and skiing. New Zealand can be mellow or action-packed, but it's always outstanding.*

There are just 4.8 million New Zealanders, scattered across 268,021 sq km: bigger than the UK with one-fourteenth of the population. Plenty of room to explore – tackle one of the epic ‘Great Walks’ or spend a few hours wandering along a beach, paddling a canoe or mountain biking through some easily accessible wilderness.

Hungry yet? NZ chefs borrow influences from as far afield as South Pacific islands and Western Europe for creative takes on locally sourced lamb and seafood like abalone, oysters and scallops. Wash it down with craft beer and legendary cool-climate wines (sublime sauvignon blanc and pinot noir).

Next up, check out some indigenous culture: across NZ you can hear Māori language, watch Māori TV, join in a *hāngi* (Māori feast) or catch a cultural performance with song, dance and a blood-curdling *haka* (war dance).

But fear not: New Zealanders these days are far from warlike. This decent nation is a place where you can relax and enjoy (rather than endure) your holiday.

“New Zealand can be mellow or action-packed, but it's always outstanding”





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# Plan Your Trip

## New Zealand's Top 12

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### Auckland

#### *Hills, harbours and heady nightlife*

Held in the embrace of two harbours and built on the peaks of long-extinct volcanoes, Auckland (p35) isn't your average metropolis. It's never going to challenge NYC or London in the excitement stakes, but this pretty city is blessed with fab beaches, museums and kickin' dining, drinking and live-music scenes. Cultural festivals are celebrated with gusto in the 'City of Sails', which has the biggest Polynesian population of any city in the world. From left: View over Auckland from the top of Mt Eden (p46); Sky Tower (p46)

# 1







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LOOK DIE BILDAGENTUR DER FOTOGRAFEN GMBH/ALAMY ©



## Wellington

*The coolest little capital on the planet?*

Windy Wellington (p131) lives up to the hype. It's long famed for its buzzing arts and music scenes, fuelled by excellent espresso, a crop of craft-beer bars, and more cafes and restaurants per capita than New York City. Edgy yet sociable, colourful yet often dressed in black, Wellington is big on the unexpected and unconventional. A few gusts of wind only zest-up the experience...though it plays havoc with all those hip haircuts. Top: Wellington Cable Car (p142); Bottom: Bar in Wellington

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## Queenstown

### ***Superb skiing, eating, drinking...and bungee jumping!***

There's much more to Queenstown (p207) – the 'Adventure Capital of NZ' – than leaping off a bridge attached to a giant rubber band. The Remarkables mountain range provides a jagged indigo backdrop to days spent skiing, tramping and mountain biking, before dining in cosmopolitan restaurants or partying in some of NZ's best bars. Keep the adrenaline flowing with hang gliding, kayaking, rafting...or maybe a more sedate detour to the Gibbston Valley wineries. Kawarau Bridge bungee (p211)

# 3



# 4

## Fiordland

### *Gorgeous fiords in NZ's deep south*

On a clear Fiordland day, Milford Sound (p233) delivers an astounding collage of waterfalls, cliffs, peaks and dark cobalt waters. Drizzle is more likely than sunshine, but arguably more atmospheric, with the iconic profile of Mitre Peak revealing itself through the mist. Approaching via the Milford Track is an iconic NZ adventure, while further south, kayaking is a superb way to explore the silent shores of remote Doubtful Sound.



# 5

## Marlborough

### *Sublime wine and wilderness*

After a few days overindulging in Marlborough (p153) sauvignon blanc or Nelson craft beer made with locally grown hops, Abel Tasman National Park (pictured right) offers tramping, kayaking and swimming in golden sandy coves with gin-clear seas. The Marlborough Sounds are an impossibly photogenic wilderness, while seaside Kaikoura is the place to spy whales, seals and local bird life.







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