



WOMEN'S COASTAL WANDERER

ITINERARY



Discover the gorgeous east coast headlands and beaches of the North Island north of Auckland with other adventurous women. Enjoy remote coastal hiking on Maori land near the Bay of Islands, join an open coast kayaking trip at Whangaroa and then drive to Cape Reinga at the tip of New Zealand. Spend two nights here in utter isolation getting to know your new friends. We will hike in the surreal dune-scapes of Cape Maria van Diemen. Then the southward journey takes us to the ancient and mighty Kauri forests. This trip is an easier option than our other women's adventures, with plenty of swimming and snorkelling to keep us busy in secret coves of clear water. We enjoy one full day hike and lots of short hikes. It is also a bit warmer in the 'winterless north'.

LENGTH	6 days
GRADE	B - You need to be in reasonably good health
START	Auckland - 8:30am, pick up zone outside Sky City, 20m from Sky Tower base, corner Victoria and Federal Streets
FINISH	Auckland - 3:00pm (approx.)
ACCOMMODATION	Camping
INCLUDED ACTIVITIES	Sand boarding
OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES	Sea Kayaking (half day - minimum of two people)*

This is a sample itinerary of what we can offer for custom groups. If you have a group of four or more, we can craft a trip that suits your group.

"BRILLIANT TOUR"

A great combination of hard hikes, beautiful swimming places, glorious vistas and the occasional kayaking or sandboarding experience. It's well organised, and while there is some driving in order to get you around the North and to isolated areas, it is very active. Highlight was definitely an unplanned impromptu swim with dolphins off a deserted beach!

~ ErinLK88, January 2017, Trip Advisor

"WANDERING THE FAR NORTH COAST"

I have never done a group tour. I have never hiked. I haven't camped for decades. I travelled on my own in the group and I LOVED IT! Thank you!

~ SpaSeeker13 - Australia, January 2017, Trip Advisor

ITINERARY

DAY 1 EAST COAST BEACHES

1km/1 hour hiking

Depart Auckland and head north. Once over the Harbour Bridge we travel up the scenic east coast. A quick cafe stop at Waipu for those who tumbled out the door without time for breakfast, before we explore a brilliant locals spot - one of the best little glow-worm grottos in the country and a great starter cave for those new to this experience. Wet feet and a bit of muddy cave stream leads to a bright glow-worm chamber. No paths or electricity here - just a natural cave. Windy coastal back roads take us north to remote coast, far from the maddening crowds. Have the first swim of the trip or take a stroll along this great stretch of coast, or do both. The beach is lined with bright Pohutukawa trees (the New Zealand Christmas tree) which cover hidden coves. These waters also offer excellent snorkelling if the sea is calm. Later we arrive at our grassy campsites on Maori tribal-land, just above an idyllic Northland beach miles from any shop, accommodation or internet. We set up our tents (share or single) and sit on the beach with a glass of wine. Later we all pitch in to prepare a BBQ, no better way to get to know new friends than trying to flip Halloumi on a hot plate! Fall asleep to the lapping waves. *Includes lunch and dinner.*

DAY 2 BAY OF ISLANDS

9 km/6 hours hiking

Plop in to the sea for a refreshing wake up or wander the beach with a mug of tea in a more civilised fashion! We break camp and pack (lightly) for this incredible summery coastal walk. We begin hiking, ascending through regenerating native bush onto open ridge tops, where we're treated to views of secret sandy coves and rocky headlands. Take a break and enjoy gazing across the sparkling blue waters of the Pacific. Along the trail, examine the whale pots of an old whaling station, left over from a time when whalers and sealers were the only Europeans interested in New Zealand. Dolphins can still often be seen around here, and very occasionally they choose to swim with us. We stop for a picnic lunch in a quiet cove with turquoise water and funky palm trees. The trail takes us to the summit of Pukehuia (345m), the highest point in the Bay of Islands, and the best spot to get a view of this magnificent area. Descending from Pukehuia we finish up in a quiet bush lined bay dotted with yachts. This is a great chance to take a dip in the clear water and freshen up after our walk. From here it's a short drive to the historic township of Russell. Take the ferry across to Paihia and enjoy the vibe of this cool little town before we drive further north to our campsite at Tauranga Bay and a welcome hot shower. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

DAY 3 WHANGAROA KAYAKING

10 km/5 hours kayaking

From our beach-side camp we drive a few minutes to the start of a fantastic guided kayak trip (optional extra) along some of the area's most remote coastline. Launching from a private beach, you paddle alongside craggy red volcanic headlands and inshore islands, through sea caves, and then enjoy lunch on an unspoiled sandy beach. Continue up into the sheltered waters of Whangaroa Harbour, either kayaking into the mangrove forests at the harbour's end or scramble up the short (but impossibly steep!) volcanic conglomerate of Kairara Rock and sit up on top of this most impressive butte and gaze out at the world below. If kayaking is a new challenge for you, we will match you in a double kayak. If you would rather not kayak, chat to your guide about the range of other hiking options, or simply chill out for the day, swimming and eating ice creams at the most agreeable Tauranga Bay. Tonight we 'dine' at the famous Mangonui Wharf Fish Shop en-route to the twin coves campsite, located in the charming Matai Bay. *Includes breakfast and lunch.*



DAY 4 CAPE REINGA/NINETY MILE BEACH

2 km/2 hours hiking

Today we drive north along the giant tombolo of sand that connects the top of the mainland to the cape (an ancient marine volcano). We visit the mountainous sand dunes at the top of Ninety Mile Beach, and we stroll across the top of this surreal landscape. And those eager to test gravity can hurtle down on sand boards - hellishly good fun. Once you've exhausted all your sand board moves we continue on to yet another beautiful campsite in a small sandy cove. Plenty of time to set up camp in the afternoon sun, have a short zzzz and then either enjoy a cliff top walk, or grab a ride with the guide to the edge of the world -- the spiritual Cape Reinga -- where the waters of the Tasman Sea and the Pacific Ocean collide. Watch the sun slip away from the northernmost tip of New Zealand and remember your friends are probably at work right now. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*



DAY 5 CAPE MARIA VAN DIEMEN, KAURI FORESTS

4-12 km/2-4 hours hiking

Time to relax this morning if you wish. Enjoy some conversation with the sea and the sky, or even your travel companions, as you amble through breakfast! Those keen for an adventure head off first thing with your guide to explore a wilder part of the Cape. Hike across Te Pahi to the iron-stained sand dunes of Cape Maria van Diemen. Climbing high, you will get grand views of this incredible piece of New Zealand landscape - usually with no one else around. Stride up an expansive stretch of empty beach before returning for a late lunch. Then we turn south and drive through Kaitiaki, crossing the Hokianga Harbour on a car ferry. In Maori mythology Hokianga is the returning place of the great Maori navigator Kupe. Another 30 min puts us in the grandeur of Waipoua Forest. Visit New Zealand's biggest Kauri -- Tane Mahuta (Lord of the Forest) -- an ancient giant estimated to be over 1250 years old. We pitch camp amongst the kauri (and campervans!) and later do a night walk, creeping around to try and stumble across the endangered North Island Brown kiwi. Generally, we are successful, but not always! Later, listen for the screeching call of the kiwi as your curl up in your sleeping bag. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*



DAY 6 KAURI FORESTS

2 km/1 hour hiking

This morning as we wander through the Trounson Kauri Reserve we feel like whispering as we sneak beneath these forest giants. The reserve is an intensively managed mainland 'island' surrounded by predator traps. The mainland island concept protects the resident birds from invasive pests and provides a refuge for many threatened species; it is home to a well-nurtured and protected population of kiwi. After lunch, we continue south to the vibrant harbour city of Auckland, arriving around 3pm. *Includes breakfast and lunch.*



Notes: This tour is affected somewhat by tide times and sea conditions - very occasionally your guide may be forced to skip something altogether. On night 3 we sometimes camp halfway up 90 mile beach. If you are doing this trip on the January departure expect to see a few more tents, sun-scorched folks, and ice creamed kids at campsites.

LIFE ON THE TRAIL

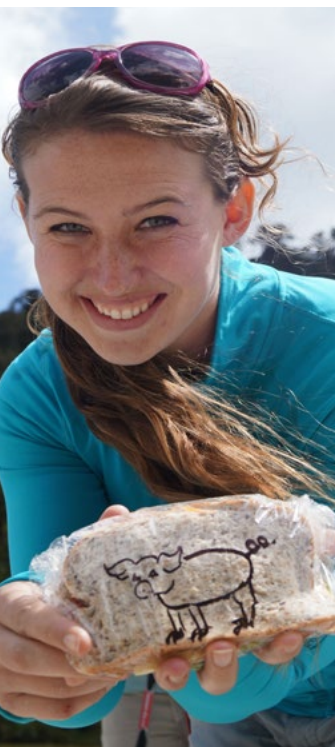
GRADE B

- Average of 4-5 hours physical activity per day; up to 6 hours.
- At times carrying small backpack of 4-5kgs.
- Tracks generally in good condition.
- Altitude gains of up to 600m on day 2.
- No hiking experience necessary.
- Reasonable standard of fitness required.
- Some energetic sections and climbs, but includes lots of time for relaxation and other activities.



GUIDES AND SAFETY

An excellent guide can make the difference between a trip of a lifetime and just an ordinary trip. Our handpicked professionals come from a range of backgrounds. Each has extensive outdoor and hiking experience and a passion for New Zealand's wild and beautiful backcountry. The guides will ensure that your trip is truly inspiring, a huge amount of fun and safe. All guides are trained in Outdoor First Aid.



FOOD

As well as being the time to rest, refuel and recharge, meal times are also a great time to get to know your fellow travellers better, sit back and enjoy the amazing surroundings and enjoy some great food! Everybody has a turn with the preparation and cooking of meals: barbecues, salads, pancakes, curries, pasta, stir-fries, hangi... Vegetarian meals are no problem. On the "wild nights" the group will usually eat pasta and rice meals (special "secret" recipes used). There is always a lot of hiking food - chocolate, nuts, raisins, biscuits. The vehicles carry a full range of cooking equipment including gas burners, woks, frying pans and billies (cooking pot).



TRANSPORT

The average driving time per day varies, some days you are in the wilderness and won't see the vehicle! On other days you might be in the vehicle for 2-3 hrs. The driving time is a chance to rest and enjoy the fantastic scenery which is forever changing. You will travel in a 12 seat minibus towing a custom-built trailer with camp equipment and your luggage. They are also equipped with a range of natural history reference books. There will be a range of roads - sealed and unsealed. The guide will often stop the vehicle if there is a great photo opportunity or primo ice cream shop!



ACCOMMODATION

Camping - You will camp in a range of campsites; on the Coastal Wanderer you will camp near the vehicle in Department of Conservation campsites or private campsites (single tent available on request). If the weather is not great for camping, eg very wet, stormy or cold conditions your guide will seek out alternative accommodation, eg lodge, cabin or crib.



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LIFE ON THE TRAIL

ADDITIONAL COSTS

Meals

One evening meal is not included in this trip.

Optional activities

Sea kayaking (NZ\$115*) or Half day (NZ\$90* minimum of 2 people)

Optional activities are paid for during the trip.

*Prices are correct at time of publishing.

BOOKING CONDITIONS

Payment

For bookings four or more months in advance of the departure a 25% deposit can be paid with the remainder due 65 days prior to your trip. For bookings within four months of the departure, full payment is required.

Cancellations

More than 20 days prior to departure - 80% refund of full ticket price.

20 to 10 days prior to departure - 50% refund of full ticket price.

Less than 10 days prior to departure - NO REFUND.

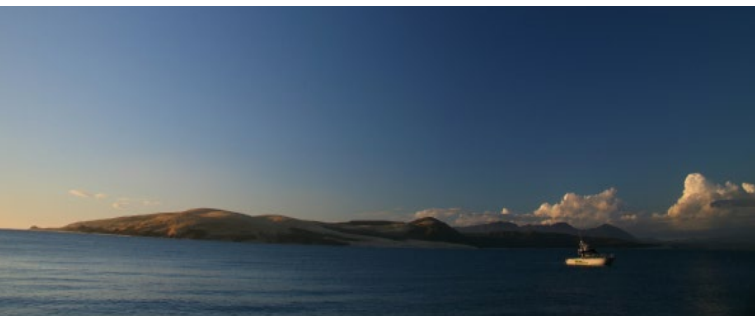
Travel Insurance

It is suggested that clients take out comprehensive travel insurance.

"FAR NORTH"

"Had the best time and it was absolutely the best way to see New Zealand in all its glory. Our guide was so multi-talented. Could cook, drive, guide, inform and sing songs around the camp fire. Highly recommend this tour for anyone thinking of visiting the real New Zealand"

~ Helen T, February 2016, **Trip Advisor**



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PACKING LIST

Items shown in bold can be hired from us (see the rate table below).
Please arrange hire at least one week prior to your departure date.

EQUIPMENT

- Backpack** (good sized day pack)
- Sleeping bag** (2 season)
- Flashlight/headlamp
- Drink bottle - 1 litre
- Sunscreen, hat and sunglasses
- Insect repellent (sandflies like foreign blood)
- Personal toiletries, medication and first aid
- Walking Poles** (optional)

WE SUPPLY

- Emergency first aid kit
- Thermarests (3/4 length)
- Plates, cutlery, mugs, pots, etc.

CLOTHING - one set for walking, one set for evenings

WALKING CLOTHES: A thermal and a fleece is great just in case it gets cold and damp. Cotton is fine but gets cold when wet and is difficult to dry.

- Raincoat** (goretex or similar)
- Hiking boots (or hiking shoes)
- Spare lightweight shoes or sandals
- Shorts or lightweight trousers (preferably quick-dry)
- Short-sleeved shirt x 2 (quick-dry, polypropylene or wool)
- Warm fleece/wool jersey** (not cotton) x 2
- Socks (we suggest 3 pairs)
- Togs (swimming costume)
- Sunhat and sunglasses (and warm hat Mar - Nov)
- Towel (lightweight travel towels are great)

SPARE CLOTHING: Comfortable clothes for non hiking days. Spare clothing can be left in the secure trailer when we are away on the hikes, so don't worry about the extra weight - ensure you have enough warm items. Outside November to March a thermal layer and a warm hat is required. Note: there are only limited opportunities to do laundry during a tour, so quick drying clothing is an advantage. Weather can change rapidly in the locations we hike so layers of clothing is ideal.

Hire gear (NZ\$)	5-7 days trip	8-11 days trip	12+ days trip
Backpack (60 litres)	\$30	\$50	\$75
Sleeping bag	\$20	\$50	\$75
Fleece jacket	\$20	\$20	\$25
Thermal top and long-johns	\$20	\$20	\$25
Raincoat	\$20	\$40	\$65
Full set (all of above)	\$90	\$140	\$245
Gaiters	\$20	\$20	\$25
Walking pole	\$20 each	\$20 each	\$25 each

It's not always easy packing - feel free to drop us a line if you have any questions.

IMPORTANT INFO

Here is a kickstart on a few things you need to know...

WHEN HIKING

- Stay together. Wait if you have not seen the group for 10 minutes.
 - Wait at all track junctions, huts, or river crossings for everyone to catch up.
 - If you get separated, stop and wait until your guide finds you.
 - Watch out for sunburn. Remember, NZ sun burns fast, wear a hat and sun block at all times until you are familiar with its strength.
 - Drink plenty of water, it is safe to drink from most of the streams in the wilderness without treating the water but do ask.
 - Help and look out for each other on river crossings, bush bashing and rock scrambling.
 - Ensure you have correct clothing - see 'packing' list.
 - Hiking tracks in NZ can be quite muddy and sometimes rough with tree roots and rocks. But this is part of the fun.
 - Snow slopes are extremely dangerous - guide leads on snow.
- No fooling around unless guide gives the OK.

CROSSING RIVERS

- River crossing accidents are a major cause of fatalities in the NZ wilderness so learning correct techniques from your guide is imperative.
- If your pack has a quick-release hip belt keep it fastened (to prevent the pack riding over your head if you end up swimming). Chest straps and other hip belts should be undone.
- Wear shorts not long pants. If wearing a rain-coat turn up and tuck under hip belt so pockets don't fill with water.
- You must wear boots when crossing rivers.
- To prevent the spread of Didymo (an invasive algae) boots, gaiters, socks etc. must be washed and dried before entering another waterway.

KAYAKING

- Always attend the safety briefing.
- Always take spare warm clothing in case the weather turns bad.
- Go to the toilet before you get into the kayak.
- Wrap valuables and cameras securely in bags or dry bags and close PROPERLY. Put adsorbent cloth/t-shirt with camera.
- Always stay together.

CYCLING & MOUNTAIN BIKING

- Always attend the safety briefing, know the meet times and 'back up' plans.
- High visibility clothes if road sections.
- Be aware if you are in the front or back of group (otherwise you might be chasing imaginary people).
- Stop to smell the roses - you might be wearing yellow, but its not the Tour de France!
- Helmets are compulsory in NZ.
- In NZ front and rear brakes are opposite to US and Europe.

CAVING

- Does your torch/headlamp have good batteries - carry spares if you need.
- If you want to take a camera, make sure that it is wrapped securely in plastic bags or dry bags.
- Go to the toilet beforehand.
- Talk to guide if you are nervous about caving beforehand.
- Cave formations take thousands of years to form - please don't touch them unless your guide okays it.

SWIMMING & BEACHES

Many NZ beaches are too dangerous for swimming, in particular the West Coast beaches.

Where conditions are suitable....

- Talk to your guide before you go swimming and don't swim alone.
- Respect the sea - never turn your back on the sea and watch out for freak waves & rips - even when beach walking.
- If you get into difficulty while swimming - raise one of your hands up above your head - stay calm.

- Be careful entering the sea. Don't run into the sea - there may be rocks below the water.
- For rescues, things that float are - sleeping mats, spare tyre, empty water bottles (jerry cans), thermarests and dry bags stuffed with clothing
- Look for Jellyfish - (check along water edge and don't swim if there are lots about) - treat with vinegar

HOT POOLS (NATURAL)

- Keep head above water at all times - water may contain amoebic meningitis.
- Watch out for boiling water/mud hazards around and in the pool
- Remove jewellery as it tends to turn green or black.

FIRES

- Observe all fire bans. Keep fires small, use only dead wood and completely put out with water before leaving and at night (includes wood burners in huts).
- Always have a bucket of water near fire to extinguish it and for burns (or stream/river nearby).
- Be careful when wearing synthetic clothing around fires. Sparks put holes in Gore-Tex and tents.
- Do not use axe without guide's okay - wear boots.

HYGIENE & TOILETS

- You'll get to a shower mostly every 1-2 days, otherwise there are rivers to have a wash in.
- Keep streams, lakes and rivers clean - when cleaning and washing, take water and wash well away from the water source (drain used water into soil to allow it to be filtered) - all soaps/detergents are harmful to water-life.
- Laundry facilities are limited while on trips (every 2-3 days).
- Always use toilets when they are provided even though long-drops may be a bit rustic!
- In situations where there is no toilet, bury toilet waste. No 1's (pee) off the track - No 2's (poop) in 5-10 cm deep hole 50-100m from any water (lake, river or stream), bury toilet paper, cover up hole with soil/leaf litter. Please do not burn toilet paper.
- Sanitary pads/tampons are treated as rubbish - carried out by user - ask guide for sanitary rubbish bags.

ENVIRONMENTAL CARE

- Correct hygiene and toilet practices are essential to keep water supplies (rivers, lakes) safe to drink.
- Remove rubbish - pack it in, pack it out. Please help guide to separate rubbish, recycling and compost.
- Keep to the track where there is one - protect native plants and animals
- Respect cultural heritage.
- Enjoy your visit - camp carefully and leave no trace of your visit. Will the next visitor know you have been there?

OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER...

- Hypothermia - make sure you wear & carry the correct clothing!
- Fitness - hiking all day with a backpack on is hard work, get fit before you come on a kiwi-style trip. If you are fit enough you will be able to take part in all the hikes.
- Hire gear - use the supplied liner with sleeping bags, carry all hire gear in pack not tied to outside. Please tell us if any repairs are required.
- Equipment - it is so easy to lose stuff in shared huts. Help us keep an eye on gear.
- Roads - remember kiwis drive on the left, look carefully when crossing the street for an ice-cream.
- Tipping - it is not expected in NZ to tip for service, but if you feel your guide has done an excellent job, tips will be accepted graciously.

Thank you for reading. Have a wonderful trip.

Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm. ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

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