

## Sky Tower, Auckland



The Sky Tower is an observation and telecommunications tower located on the corner of Victoria and Federal Streets in the Auckland CBD, Auckland City, New Zealand. It is 328 metres (1,076 ft) tall, as measured from ground level to the top of the mast, making it the tallest man-made structure in the Southern Hemisphere. It has become an iconic landmark in Auckland's skyline due to its height and unique design.

The tower is part of the SKYCITY Auckland casino complex, originally built in 1994–1997 for Harrah's Entertainment.[3] The tower attracts an average of 1,150 visitors per day (over 415,000 per year).

The Sky Tower has several upper levels that are accessible to the public:

Level 50: Sky Lounge

Level 51: Main Observation Deck

Level 52: Orbit 360° Dining

Level 53: The Sugar Club restaurant, SkyWalk and SkyJump

Level 60: Sky Deck

The upper portion of the tower contains two restaurants and a cafe—including New Zealand's only revolving restaurant, located 190 m (620 ft) from the ground, which turns 360 degrees every hour.[5] There is also a brasserie-style buffet located one floor above the main observatory level. It has three observation decks at different heights, each providing 360-degree views of the city. The main observation level at 186 m (610 ft) has 38 mm (1.5 in) thick glass sections of flooring giving a view straight to the ground.[6] The top observation deck labeled "Skydeck" sits just below the main antenna at 220 m (720 ft) and gives views of up to 82 km (51 mi) in the distance.[7]

The tower also features the "SkyJump", a 192-metre (630 ft)[8] jump from the observation deck, during which a jumper can reach up to 85 km/h (53 mph). The jump is guide-cable-controlled to prevent jumpers from colliding with the tower in case of wind gusts.[9] Climbs into the antenna mast portion (300 m or 980 ft heights) are also possible for tour groups,[8] as is a walk around the exterior.[10]

The tower is also used for telecommunications and broadcasting with the Auckland Peering Exchange (APE) being located on Level 48.[11] The aerial at the top of the tower hosts the largest FM combiner in the world[6] which combines with 58 wireless microwave links located above the top restaurant to provide a number of services. These include television, wireless internet, RT, and weather measurement services.[6]

The tower is Auckland's primary FM radio transmitter, and is one of four infill terrestrial television transmitters in Auckland, serving areas not covered by the main transmitter at Waiatarua in the Waitakere Ranges. A total of twenty-three FM radio stations and six digital terrestrial television multiplexes broadcast from the tower.[12][13] Two VHF analogue television channels broadcasting from the tower were switched off in the early hours of Sunday 1 December 2013 as part of New Zealand's digital television transition.[14]

The tower was also used for a Fast Forward on the thirteenth season of The Amazing Race. Their task was for teams (Ken & Tina in particular) to use the tower's maintenance ladders to climb from the sky deck to the red light at the top to get a friend, the Travelocity gnome. It also appeared on the first season of the Asian version of the show for a RoadBlock task. One member from each team had to complete the "SkyJump" before continuing the race.