



# New Zealand

Auckland · Rotorua · Napier · Wellington

**March 9 – 21, 2026**

Randal Salars · Monika Salars · Vikki Drewel

+ 2 additional travelers | Group of 5

United Airlines Confirmation: **JTZWFZ**



## Flight Details

#	FLIGHT	ROUTE	DATE	DEPART	ARRIVE
1	UA5583	Tucson (TUS) → San Francisco (SFO)	Sat, Mar 7	1:50 PM	3:30 PM
2	UA917	San Francisco (SFO) → Auckland (AKL)	Sat, Mar 7	10:45 PM	9:10 AM +2
3	QF172	Wellington (WLG) → Melbourne (MEL)	Sat, Mar 21	2:35 PM	4:35 PM
4	UA61	Melbourne (MEL) → San Francisco (SFO)	Sun, Mar 22	12:00 PM	8:25 AM
5	UA5962	San Francisco (SFO) → Tucson (TUS)	Sun, Mar 22	4:15 PM	6:30 PM



**IMPORTANT:** Must be at Wellington Airport by **12:30 PM on Saturday, March 21**. The airport is 15 min from central Wellington. Plan to leave hotel by 11:30 AM.



## Week 1: Auckland → Rotorua → Taupō (March 9–15)

### Monday, March 9 — Auckland Arrival

DAY 1

- Arrive Auckland Airport at 9:10 AM
- Clear customs & biosecurity (allow 1.5 hours)
- Pick up rental car / settle in



**Manha Hotel Auckland Airport**

### Tuesday, March 10 — Hobbiton & Rotorua

DAY 2

- **7:00 AM – 4:00 PM:** Hobbiton Movie Set Tour
- Drive to Rotorua (~45 min from Hobbiton)



**Executive on Fenton, Rotorua**

### Wednesday, March 11 — Rotorua Ziplines

DAY 3

- Rotorua Ziplines canopy tour through native forest



**Executive on Fenton, Rotorua**

## Thursday, March 12 — Redwoods Treewalk

DAY 4

- **Redwoods Treewalk:** 28 suspension bridges through 120-year-old redwood trees

 Executive on Fenton, Rotorua

## Friday, March 13 — Waitomo Glowworm Caves

DAY 5

- Day trip to **Waitomo Glowworm Caves** (~2 hr drive each way)

 Executive on Fenton, Rotorua

## Saturday, March 14 — Māori Culture

DAY 6

- **Whakarewarewa – The Living Māori Village**
- Traditional Māori dance, cultural performances, geothermal features

 Executive on Fenton, Rotorua

## Sunday, March 15 — Taupō & Huka Falls

DAY 7

- Drive to Taupō (~1 hour from Rotorua)
- **Huka Falls** – NZ's most visited natural attraction
- Enjoy Lakeland Resort pool & hot tubs

 Lakeland Resort Taupo



## Week 2: Taupō → Napier → Wellington (March 16–21)



### Midpoint Destination: Napier, Hawke's Bay

*Art Deco Elegance · World-Class Wine · Spectacular Coastline*

- ✓ Only 1.5 hours from Taupō (short, easy drive)
- ✓ Award-winning wine region (70+ wineries)
- ✓ Cape Kidnappers gannet colony
- ✓ Excellent food & cafe scene
- ✓ World-famous Art Deco architecture
- ✓ Beautiful beaches along Marine Parade
- ✓ Te Mata Peak – jaw-dropping panoramic views
- ✓ Breaks Taupō–Wellington drive perfectly in half

### Monday, March 16 — Taupō → Napier

DAY 8



**Drive:** Taupō → Napier via SH5 | 140 km | ~1.5 hours

#### MORNING

- **8:30 AM:** Depart Taupō after breakfast
- Stop at the Taupō Lookout for Lake Taupō views
- **10:00 AM:** Arrive in Napier, check into accommodation

#### AFTERNOON

- **11:00 AM:** Self-Guided Art Deco Walk through Napier's city center  
Free Art Deco app available or grab a map from the i-SITE. Key buildings: Daily Telegraph, ASB Bank, T&G Building. Allow 1.5–2 hours.
- **1:00 PM:** Lunch at **Bistronomy** (60 West Quay, Ahuriri)  
Excellent NZ cuisine in the charming Ahuriri harbor village
- **2:30 PM:** Marine Parade walk & Napier Beach  
Stroll along the iconic promenade. Swim or relax at Napier Beach. See Tom Parker Fountain & Pania of the Reef statue.

#### EVENING

- **6:00 PM:** Dinner at **Pacifica Restaurant** (209 Marine Parade)  
Award-winning seafood restaurant, one of NZ's best. BOOK AHEAD – very popular.
- **8:00 PM:** Sunset drinks at Monica Loves (Ahuriri waterfront)



**Kennedy Park Resort Napier**

### Tuesday, March 17 — Full Day in Hawke's Bay

DAY 9

#### MORNING

- **8:00 AM:** Breakfast at **Mister D** (corner of Tennyson & Hastings St)  
Best cafe in Napier, vibrant atmosphere

- **9:30 AM:** Drive to **Te Mata Peak** (30 min south in Havelock North)  
FREE – drive to the summit for 360° views. Short walks at the top (15–45 min). One of the most Instagrammed spots in Hawke's Bay.

#### LATE MORNING / AFTERNOON

- **11:00 AM:** Hawke's Bay Wine Tasting  
Self-drive: Mission Estate (NZ's oldest winery, free tastings), Craggy Range (stunning setting), Church Road (cellar tours). Or book a guided wine tour (~\$100-150 NZD/person).
- **1:00 PM:** Lunch at a winery – **Craggy Range or Elephant Hill**

#### AFTERNOON

- **3:00 PM:** **Cape Kidnappers Gannet Colony**  
One of the world's largest mainland gannet colonies. Book the Gannet Beach Adventures tractor-trailer tour (~\$50 NZD/adult, 4 hours). Truly spectacular and unique to NZ.

#### EVENING

- **7:00 PM:** Dinner at **The Emporium Eatery** (34 Hastings St, Napier)



**Kennedy Park Resort Napier**

## Wednesday, March 18 — Napier → Wellington

DAY 10

 **Drive:** Napier → Wellington via SH2 | 320 km | ~4 hours with stops

### MORNING

- **8:00 AM:** Breakfast in Napier
- **9:00 AM:** **Ocean Beach** (Haumoana, 20 min from Napier)  
Expansive wild black-sand beach. Great morning walk, dramatic coastline.
- **10:30 AM:** Hit the road toward Wellington via SH2

### EN ROUTE STOPS (PICK 1 OR 2)

- **Pūkaha National Wildlife Centre** (near Masterton, ~2.5 hrs in)  
See native kiwi birds, tuatara, and endangered species. Great 45-min stop.
- **Greytown** (NZ's oldest inland town)  
Cute Victorian main street with boutique shops and cafes. Good coffee stop.

### AFTERNOON

- **2:30–3:00 PM:** Arrive in Wellington, check in
- **4:00 PM:** Walk along the Wellington Waterfront
- **Te Papa Tongarewa** (Museum of New Zealand) – FREE entry  
World-class national museum. Allow at least 1.5–2 hours.

### EVENING

- **6:30 PM:** Dinner on **Cuba Street** – Wellington's vibrant food strip  
Loretta (craft cocktails & shared plates), Havana Bar (Cuban-inspired), or Capitol Restaurant (fine dining)



**Wellington Hotel/Airbnb (to be booked)**

## Thursday, March 19 — Wellington Beach Day 1

DAY 11

### MORNING

- **9:00 AM:** **Oriental Bay Beach**  
Wellington's most popular beach, golden sand. Right on the harbor, calm water. Cafes and ice cream along the promenade.
- **11:00 AM:** Ferry to **Days Bay** (30-min East by West ferry from Queens Wharf, ~\$14 NZD return)  
Beautiful sheltered beach across the harbor. Swimming, kayaking, beachside cafe.

### AFTERNOON

- **1:00 PM:** Lunch at Days Bay Pavilion or pack a picnic
- **2:30 PM:** Ferry back to Wellington
- **3:30 PM:** **Weta Workshop Unleashed** (Miramar, 15 min from city)  
The legendary effects studio behind LOTR, Avatar & more. Book the Miniatures Stage Tour (\$50 NZD/adult, 90 min). Incredible if you enjoyed Hobbiton!
- **5:30 PM:** **Lyall Bay Beach** (5 min from Weta)  
Surfer beach with great sunset views. Fish & chips from Maranui Cafe (perched above the beach).

### EVENING

- **7:30 PM:** Dinner at **Charley Noble** (waterfront) or **The Botanist**



## Friday, March 20 — Wellington Beach Day 2 & Farewell

DAY 12

### MORNING

- **8:30 AM:** Breakfast at **Prefab Eatery** (14 Jessie St)
- **10:00 AM:** **Wellington Cable Car** (Lambton Quay → Kelburn, \$10 NZD return)  
Iconic Wellington experience. At the top: Wellington Botanic Garden (free, beautiful walk down). Harbor views.

### LATE MORNING

- **11:30 AM:** **Scorching Bay Beach** (10 min drive from city)  
Sheltered, calm, clear water – best swimming beach in Wellington. Chocolate Fish Cafe right there.

### AFTERNOON

- **1:00 PM:** Lunch at **Chocolate Fish Cafe** (497A Karaka Bay Rd)  
Legendary Wellington cafe, right on the water
- **2:30 PM:** Free time – more beach, Cuba Street shopping, Mount Victoria Lookout (free, 360° views), or Zealandia Ecosanctuary (\$21 NZD)

### EVENING — FAREWELL DINNER

- **7:00 PM:** Farewell dinner at **Logan Brown** (192 Cuba St)  
Wellington's most celebrated fine-dining restaurant. Stunning heritage bank building. BOOK AHEAD. ~\$80-120 NZD/person for 3 courses with wine.
- Pack bags & organize for departure

 Saturday, March 21 — Departure Day

DAY 13

**⚠ Flight QF172 departs Wellington at 2:35 PM → Be at airport by 12:30 PM**

- **8:00 AM:** Sleep in / leisurely breakfast
- **9:30 AM:** Last walk along Oriental Bay or Wellington Waterfront
- **10:30 AM:** Pick up last souvenirs from Te Papa Museum shop
- **11:00 AM:** Return rental car at Wellington Airport
- **11:30 AM:** Head to Wellington Airport (15 min from central city)
- **12:30 PM:** Check in for QF172 to Melbourne
- **2:35 PM:**  Depart Wellington → Melbourne (arrives 4:35 PM local)



## Napier Accommodation (2 nights: March 16–17)

### Kennedy Park Resort Napier

11 Storkey Street, Napier 4110 | kennedypark.co.nz | +64 6 843 9126

**Unit Type:** 2-Bedroom Motel Unit or Tourist Flat (sleeps 5–6)

**Price:** From ~\$180–250 NZD/night (~\$36–50 per person/night)

**Amenities:** Full kitchen, separate bedrooms, lounge, swimming pool, BBQ area, parking

**Location:** Walking distance to Marine Parade Beach & Art Deco city center

**Why it's the best choice:** Kennedy Park is perfectly positioned between Marine Parade beach and the Art Deco city center (5–10 min walk to both). Their motel units comfortably sleep 5 with a full kitchen so you can store wine purchases and cook breakfast. The pool is a bonus after wine tasting. At ~\$40/person/night, it's unbeatable vs. booking 2-3 hotel rooms. Book directly on their website for best rates.



## Trip Summary

DATE	DAY	LOCATION	HIGHLIGHTS
<b>WEEK 1 — AUCKLAND → ROTORUA → TAUPŌ</b>			
Mar 9 (Mon)	1	Auckland	Arrival, rest & settle
Mar 10 (Tue)	2	Hobbiton → Rotorua	Hobbiton Movie Set Tour
Mar 11 (Wed)	3	Rotorua	Ziplines
Mar 12 (Thu)	4	Rotorua	Redwoods Treewalk
Mar 13 (Fri)	5	Waitomo (day trip)	Glowworm Caves

Mar 14 (Sat)	6	Rotorua	Whakarewarewa Māori Village
Mar 15 (Sun)	7	Taupō	Huka Falls
<b>WEEK 2 — NAPIER (MIDPOINT) → WELLINGTON</b>			
Mar 16 (Mon)	8	Napier	Art Deco walk, beach, Pacifica dinner
Mar 17 (Tue)	9	Napier	Te Mata Peak, wine tasting, Cape Kidnappers
Mar 18 (Wed)	10	Wellington	Scenic drive, Te Papa Museum, Cuba Street
Mar 19 (Thu)	11	Wellington 🎉	Oriental Bay, Days Bay ferry, Weta Workshop
Mar 20 (Fri)	12	Wellington 🎉	Cable Car, Scorching Bay, farewell dinner
Mar 21 (Sat)	13	Departure ✈️	WLG → MEL → SFO → TUS



## Booking Checklist (Do ASAP)

- Napier accommodation (Kennedy Park or Bookabach) — March 16–18
- Wellington accommodation — March 18–21 (3 nights)
- Cape Kidnappers Gannet Beach Adventures tractor tour — March 17
- Weta Workshop Unleashed tickets — March 19
- Pacifica Restaurant dinner reservation — March 16
- Logan Brown farewell dinner reservation — March 20
- Wellington rental car drop-off confirmation at WLG airport



## Estimated Budget (Per Person, Week 2 Only)

Accommodation (Napier, 2 nights)	~\$100 NZD
Accommodation (Wellington, 3 nights)	~\$200 NZD
Meals & Drinks (6 days)	~\$350 NZD
Activities & Attractions	~\$250 NZD
Fuel contribution	~\$50 NZD

**Total per person**      **~\$950 NZD (~\$575 USD)**



### March Weather (Late Summer / Early Autumn)

**Average highs:** 22–25°C (72–77°F) | **Lows:** 13–15°C (55–59°F)

**Water temp:** 19–21°C (66–70°F) – swimmable!

**Pack:** Sunscreen, sunglasses, light layers, a rain jacket. March is one of the best months to visit.

New Zealand Trip Itinerary — March 9–21, 2026 — Confirmation JTZWZFZ

Have an incredible trip! 