



Exploring Australia & New Zealand

Fall 2024 – Winter/Spring 2025

Small group touring and the Lands Down Under – they add up to a perfect combination as we travel from Australia's sophisticated Sydney, sacred Uluru (Ayers Rock), and the wondrous Great Barrier Reef to New Zealand's towering Mount Cook and breathtaking Milford Sound, plus Rotorua, Queenstown, and Auckland.

**With an Post-Tour Extension:
Auckland – On Your Own**

Itinerary

Created on Feb 14, 2024

Exploring Australia & New Zealand

Day-by-Day Itinerary

DAY 1: Depart U.S. for Sydney, Australia

DAY 2: Depart U.S. for Sydney, Australia

DAY 3: Arrive Sydney

We arrive in Sydney this morning and transfer to our hotel, where the day is at leisure to relax and refresh. Tonight, we meet our fellow travelers and Odysseys Tour Director at a briefing followed by a welcome dinner at our hotel.

Accommodations: Sofitel Sydney Wentworth

Meals: Dinner

DAY 4: Sydney

Today's tour of this cosmopolitan city features The Rocks historic neighborhood, Darling Harbour and Mrs. Macquarie's Point, Rose and Watson's bays, and popular Bondi Beach. Then we board a catamaran for a lunch cruise around Sydney Harbour.

Accommodations: Sofitel Sydney Wentworth

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 5: Sydney

This morning we tour the iconic Sydney Opera House then visit Featherdale Wildlife Park, where wombats, dingoes, and koalas reside. Our afternoon is at leisure; we dine tonight at a local restaurant.

Accommodations: Sofitel Sydney Wentworth

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 6: Sydney/Uluru (Ayers Rock)

We fly today to Australia's Outback, reaching our hotel in time for lunch on our own. Then we depart for Kata Tjuta National Park, site of the Olga Rocks, the dramatic domed rock formations venerated by Aboriginal peoples. Our tour here features sacred Walpa Gorge, the creek that winds through two of the tallest Olgas. Late this afternoon, we watch the sun set over the massive sandstone monolith of Uluru then dine under the stars at a special Sounds of Silence experience.

Accommodations: Voyages Sails in the Desert

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7: Uluru (Ayers Rock)

Early risers have the option to watch the sun rise over Uluru this morning. Then we all spend time here before returning to our hotel for time at leisure. This afternoon we participate in a traditional Aboriginal dot painting experience where we learn about the Anangu culture and way of life. Late afternoon we return to our hotel, where we dine tonight.

Accommodations: Voyages Sails in the Desert

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 8: Uluru/Cairns

It's a travel day as we depart Uluru for tropical Cairns, gateway to Australia's Far North.

Accommodations: Pullman Reef Hotel Casino

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 9: Cairns/Great Barrier Reef

This morning we board a boat for a day-long excursion to the Great Barrier Reef, at 1,200 miles long the world's largest living organism and richest marine resource. We pull up at Michaelmas Cay where we can swim, snorkel, or view the reef from a semi-submersible vessel.

Accommodations: Pullman Reef Hotel Casino

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 10: Cairns

It's a full day, beginning at Mossman Gorge where we embark on a Ngadiku Dreamtime Walk conducted by local Indigenous people. Then we travel to the mountain village of Kuranda, surrounded by the world's oldest living tropical rainforest, where we have time to explore on our own before we descend via the gondolas of Skyrail.

Accommodations: Pullman Reef Hotel Casino

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 11: Cairns/Christchurch, New Zealand

Today we travel via Sydney to Christchurch, New Zealand's Garden City.

Accommodations: Rydges Latimer Christchurch

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 12: Christchurch

Our morning city tour features the Botanic Gardens; Cathedral Square, the beating heart of the city and site of Christchurch Cathedral; and the memorial to victims of the 2011 earthquake. This afternoon is at leisure for independent exploration; dinner is at our hotel.

Accommodations: Rydges Latimer Christchurch

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 13: Christchurch/Mount Cook National Park

We depart by coach this morning for the journey south to Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park in New Zealand's Southern Alps. En route we stop for lunch and a visit to a local farm before we reach our hotel late this afternoon.

Accommodations: The Hermitage Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 14: Mount Cook

This morning's tour of alpine Mount Cook Village includes a visit to the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Center, where we see a 3D planetarium movie about the region. We also visit the Hillary Gallery, commemorating Sir Edmund's achievements, including the first ascent of Mount Cook's difficult South Ridge in 1948 (at 12,316 feet, Mount Cook is New Zealand's tallest mountain). After time in the village for lunch on our own, this afternoon is at leisure to relax amid the breathtaking scenery, hike, or take an optional scenic flight (weather permitting).

Accommodations: The Hermitage Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 15: Mount Cook/Queenstown

We depart this morning for Queenstown, stopping en route in the historic gold mining hamlet of Arrowtown followed by a visit to Kawarau Bridge Bungy, the world's first bungy jump operation open to the public. Mid-afternoon we reach Queenstown.

Accommodations: Hotel St. Moritz

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 16: Milford Sound

Our day-long excursion to Milford Sound includes a nature cruise through the breathtaking fjords. We have lunch on board then later have the opportunity to return to Queenstown on an optional scenic flight (weather permitting).

Accommodations: Hotel St. Moritz

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 17: Queenstown

Today is at leisure to enjoy New Zealand's adventure capital as we wish.

Accommodations: Hotel St. Moritz

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 18: Queenstown/Rotorua

We depart today for the Maori center of Rotorua, with its geysers, bubbling mud pools, and thermal hot springs. Upon arrival, we take a panoramic tour of the city.

Accommodations: Regent of Rotorua

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 19: Rotorua

This morning we visit Paradise Valley Springs, which showcases New Zealand's biodiversity with native flora and wildlife, including alpaca, llama, and wallabies. Then we drive to National Kiwi Trust, dedicated to rehabilitating injured kiwis, the national bird. This evening we visit Te Puia Thermal Reserve and Cultural Centre for a traditional *hangi* dinner and Maori performance.

Accommodations: Regent of Rotorua

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 20: Rotorua/Auckland

En route to Auckland, we stop this morning at Ruakuri Caves to see the unique glowworms that illuminate the underground grottoes and caves. We reach Auckland late this afternoon; we're on our own for dinner tonight.

Accommodations: Grand Millennium Auckland

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 21: Auckland

Our half-day tour of this city set atop 48 volcanic hills features glittering Auckland Harbour and the America's Cup Village. We also visit the War Memorial Museum, with its prized Maori and Pacific Islander collections. Tonight we enjoy a farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

Accommodations: Grand Millennium Auckland

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 22: Depart for U.S.

This afternoon we depart for the airport for the flight to Los Angeles (via Sydney) and our return flights home.

Meals: Breakfast

PLEASE NOTE

This trip involves full days of sightseeing and significant amounts of walking on stairs and uneven surfaces. You should be in good physical condition to enjoy the tour to its fullest.

This tour itinerary was generated for Exploring Australia & New Zealand on Feb 14, 2024. Please visit the Exploring Australia & New Zealand page at <https://www.odysseys-unlimited.com/tours/australia-the-south-pacific/exploring-australia-new-zealand-fall-2024-winter-spring-2025/> for the latest and most accurate information.