

it's about the

Experience

Auckland City to Coast Explorer

Avida Daydreams > New Zealand



DURATION: 3 Days

TRAVEL: 100kms

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IN THREE DAYS YOU'LL FIND OUT WHY AUCKLAND'S LIFESTYLE IS RATED SO HIGHLY.

Visit picturesque [Waiheke Island](#), known for its vineyards, beaches and artists' studios. Spend a day exploring the sights and sounds of central Auckland. Then travel west to Auckland's wild side, where you can explore the rugged black-sand coast..

STAGE 1: SPEND THE DAY ON WAIHEKE ISLAND

FERRY: 35MINS (ONE WAY) [FULLERS FERRIES](#)

Auckland's Hauraki Gulf is home to a selection of beautiful islands, the most well known of which is Waiheke Island.

Sometimes called the 'Island of Wine', Waiheke is a year-round favourite with something to suit everyone from [wine tours](#) to art studio visits or simply relaxing on a secluded beach. There are also a stunning array of outdoor activities including zip lining, archery, clay pigeon shooting, sea kayaking, horse riding and golf.

Getting around is easy too. Catch one of the regular ferries that run to Waiheke from downtown Auckland. Once on the island, there are public buses and taxis, or you can hire a mountain bike, motor scooter or car. And if you've already got a car or bike, you can bring it over with you on the car ferry. Waiheke makes a great day trip or, to stay a little longer, choose from one of the island's many accommodation options and spend the night.

In landscape, lifestyle and experience, Waiheke is a world away. The white sandy beaches at Oneroa, Palm Beach and Onetangi slope gently down into the Hauraki Gulf and are perfect for swimming, kayaking, or having a picnic.

If you're a walker, explore the island's trails which meander along cliff tops, down to the beaches and into cool enclaves of native forest. At the eastern end of the island the Stony Batter walkway leads you to a system of World War II gun emplacements and underground tunnels.



Waiheke Island - 'Island of Wine'

STAGE 2: EXPLORE AUCKLAND CITY

Spend the day getting to know the vibrant 'City of Sails' with a huge range of activities and attractions on your doorstep.

The Sky Tower offers 360-degree views of New Zealand's biggest city. Get your adrenaline pumping while you're there with a SkyWalk or SkyJump. Those who like to keep their feet firmly on the ground may prefer a trip to the [Auckland Museum](#) or [Auckland Art Gallery](#) for a glimpse into New Zealand's unique history and culture. The afternoon is a perfect time to visit some of the city's volcanic cones; kayak to [Rangitoto](#) or climb Mount Eden to see the city at sunset. End the day with dinner at one of Auckland's dining precincts, Wynyard Quarter, the Viaduct or Britomart.



Auckland Museum - Auckland

STAGE 3: VISIT AUCKLAND'S WEST COAST

TRAVEL TIME APPROX: 55 MIN | 40 KM TO PIHA VIA SH16 & UR13

[Auckland's West Coast](#) is home to a rugged windswept coastline, long, black-sand beaches and pristine native rainforest. Spend the afternoon on the rugged black-sand beach of Piha. Climb Lion Rock and watch experienced surfers ride the waves. The lagoon at Bethalls Beach makes a great swimming spot or you can follow the trail that crosses the northern headland to secluded O'Neill Bay, another favourite with surfers.



Between August and March, Muriwai hosts a large gannet colony, viewing platforms allow you to get up close to these fascinating birds. This is also a good place to hire blokarts, bikes and kites and explore the long expanse of beach.

Must see: Whatipu is at the northern head of the entrance to the Manukau Harbour. Powerful currents cross the sand bars to meet the long ocean swells. Many early ships were lost here when they strayed from the deeper channel. A native forest walk through the ranges returns along this beach with its hill-sized sand dunes, sun-dried driftwood and a cave once used as a ballroom.



WHERE TO STAY?

Takapuna Beach Holiday Park - 0800 872 3224 (Within NZ)

takapunabeachholidaypark.co.nz

This article was written in conjunction with [Tourism Zealand](#).

For more information go to www.newzealand.com/au