

BEST OF THE BAY OF ISLANDS

1, 2 & 3 DAY TOURS
FROM AUCKLAND

Stay in the Bay Dolphin Discoveries 'Hole in the Rock' cruise * Fly back to Auckland

Day One

6.35 – 7:15pm A **Gray Line NZ** coach will collect you from your hotel / motel and transfer you to the Gray Line Travel Centre at **172 Quay St.** Please report to the counter on arrival to pay or exchange vouchers.

7.30am Tour departs Gray Line Travel Centre.

Travel over Auckland's Harbour Bridge via the North Shore and through the lush countryside to Warkworth.

8.30am A brief stop (time permitting) will be made at the Parry Kauri Park where you are able to view one of world's mightiest trees, the kauri, one of New Zealand's native trees.

Continue through Warkworth, rich in heritage and a hub which services the wider region of Matakana, Leigh, Snells Beach and Kawau Island.

Pass through Wellsford, a busy country township which services the local farming and horticultural communities.

9.25am Morning tea and rest stop enroute in Kaiwaka – a little town known for its lights which illuminate the buildings at night.

Note: if you plan to purchase your own lunch today, the Gateway North Cafe in Kaiwaka has a full selection of sandwiches, rolls etc.

After morning tea, continue on a slow climb up the Brynderwyns, along the Waipu Straits and on to Whangarei – New Zealand's most northern city.

11.00am Whangarei

Whangarei's full name is *Whangarei Terenga Paraoa* – translated as "swimming place of the whales" which can be further translated as "the meeting place of the chiefs". It's known as the commercial city of the North and is well known for its beaches at the Whangarei Heads and the Tutukaka Coast. A growing population, $\frac{3}{4}$ being of European descent and the other $\frac{1}{4}$ are mainly *tangata whenua* – Maori, with many other cultures starting to settle here.

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12.00pm Arrive in the Bay of Islands and proceed along the attractive shoreline to the historic **Waitangi Treaty Grounds**.

Enjoy a guided tour of the Waitangi Treaty Grounds which overlook the Bay of Islands. It plays an important part in New Zealand's history as this is where the signing of a treaty between the Maori and European people took place. Walk through the *Te Whare Runanga Marae* - Maori Meeting House - which represents all tribes of New Zealand. View *Ngatokimatawhaorua* – one of the world's largest Maori War Canoes.

You will be met by your driver at the Waitangi Visitor Information Centre and continue to **Paihia Wharf** to join your tour to Russell.

1.30pm Depart for Russell by Fullers Ferry.

Upon arrival please check in for your mini tour at the Fullers office which is located on the wharf.

2.00pm Enjoy a fascinating tour by mini bus of New Zealand's most historic settlement.

3.00pm Return to Paihia by Fullers Ferry.

Lunch is by own arrangements and is a little later in the day than normal. There is time to walk along the foreshore of Paihia.

Accommodation:

KINGSGATE AUTOLODGE

Marsden Road, Paihia

Tel: (09) 402-7416

Remainder of the day at leisure and dinner by own arrangements. There is a restaurant at the hotel or please see the reception for details of nearby restaurants.

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Day Two

8.15am Please see the front desk to arrange a courtesy transfer to the **Explore NZ** office located opposite the Maritime Wharf.

Note - please complete check-out procedures at this time and drop your luggage off at the Salt Air office next to the Maritime Wharf.

8.45am Report to the **Explore NZ** Office opposite the Maritime Wharf for the fabulous **Dolphin Discoveries 'Hole in the Rock' cruise**.

9.00am Discover what the Bay of Islands is really all about. The Bay boasts some of the most spectacular ecosystems and has become renowned as a world class playground, this cruise is an experience like no other.

View the iconic 'Hole in the Rock', meet the local dolphins, visit the stunning Otehei Bay and enjoy time on the beach exploring Urupukapuka Island and learning or even become involved in the incredible community ecological restoration programme, 'Project Island Song' that is occurring throughout the eastern Bay of Islands.

Learn about the rich history and culture of the bay while cruise amongst the 144 stunning islands.

*If you would like to stay on the island for the afternoon, please ensure you book a return transfer on the 3:45pm departure.

1.00pm Return to Paihia.

Remainder of the day until 4.20pm is free for you to enjoy some of the many interesting activities available in the Bay of Islands.

*Swimming

*Golf

*Bush walks

*Boat charters

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Lazing on the beach

Helicopter flights

Museum of Shipwrecks

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- 4:20pm Collect your luggage and meet your **Salt Air** transfer to the Kerikeri Airport in front of the Maritime Building.
- Check in for your flight back to Auckland.
- 5.00pm Your scenic flight south departs.
- 6.00pm After a brief stop in Whangarei (if required) arrive at North Shore Airfield and meet your transfer to downtown Auckland.
- 6.30pm Arrive downtown Auckland.
(approx)