

BEST OF THE BAY OF ISLANDS

1, 2 & 3 DAY TOURS
FROM AUCKLAND

The Best of the Bay Dolphin Discoveries 'Swim with the Dolphins' 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.
- 12.00pm Arrive in the Bay of Islands and proceed along the attractive shoreline to the historic **Waitangi Treaty Grounds.**

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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.

Day Two

7:15am You will be collected from the Kingsgate Autolodge for your day tour to the Cape Reinga.

Departing Paihia you will make your way north to the Gumdigger's Park where an ancient Kauri forest was buried thousands of years ago.

There will be a morning tea stop before Gumdiggers Park at Awanui where you will have the opportunity to purchase a hot drink or breakfast if you haven't already had it.

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Boxed Lunch included.

After a short drive back on the bus you will arrive at the famous Ninety Mile Beach.

Enjoy breathtaking views that go on forever as you drive along this 'Highway of the North'. Climb giant sand dunes at the Te Pahi stream and toboggan back down if you wish.

Arriving at Cape Reinga you will enjoy magnificent sweeping views of where the Tasman Sea and the Pacific Ocean meet.

Visit the 'world famous' Mangonui Fish shop on the way home and grab the freshest fish and chips and a cold drink from the fully licensed bar (own cost).

*Please note the activity order may change due to the tide.

6.00pm Return to your Hotel.

ACCOMMODATION:
KINGSGATE HOTEL AUTOLODGE

The evening is at your leisure

Day Three:

7.15am 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 offices next to the Maritime Wharf.

7.45am Report to the **Explore NZ** Office opposite the Maritime Wharf for the amazing 'Swim with the Dolphins' cruise.

8.00am Join **Dolphin Discoveries** for the ultimate dolphin eco-adventure! Cruise among the 144 islands and see dolphins in their natural environment. Once mammals have been encountered our experienced crew will tell you all about these wonderful creatures and their habits. Our crew will assess the behaviour of the dolphins on the day and decide whether swimming with the dolphins will be possible (DOC regulations).

You will then be given an option to join the dolphins in the water and swim with them. The modern high speed catamaran is purpose built for dolphin

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watching and swimming and offers easy access to the water, which is the warmest in New Zealand.

Complimentary use of snorkels, goggles, fins and wetsuit when required.

Urupukapuka Island

If conditions allow you may have time to stop at Otehei Bay on Urupukapuka Island.

Learn about or even become involved in the incredible community ecological restoration programme, 'Project Island Song' that is occurring throughout the eastern Bay of Islands.

***If you do stop, and you choose to stay on the island please ensure you book yourself onto the 3:45pm transfer back to Paihia.**

12.00pm 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	*	Lazing on the beach
*Golf	*	Helicopter flights
*Bush walks	*	Museum of Shipwrecks
*Boat charters		

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 (approx) Arrive downtown Auckland.