

The best MARCO POLO Insider Tips

Our top 15 Insider Tips

INSIDER TIP ➔ **Polynesia pure**

For body and soul: at the market in Otara, a suburb of Auckland, you can immerse yourself in a little but authentic bit of exotic Polynesia → p. 37

INSIDER TIP ➔ **An idyll to dream in**

That pioneering feeling: set among fields, *Puhoi* keeps the memory of the first settlers from Bohemia alive → p. 39

INSIDER TIP ➔ **Driving on the wild side**

The *Forgotten World Highway* (SH 43) winds its way through a bizarre landscape with Whangamona village republic in the middle → p. 44

INSIDER TIP ➔ **An embarrassment of riches**

Far away from the main tourist roads the *Tutuakak Coast* bewitches visitors with its maritime charm: If you do not like to dive or fish there is an abundance of glorious beaches to make stops at → p. 39

INSIDER TIP ➔ **Tasty treats**

The *Coromandel Oyster Company* grows its own oysters which you can buy fresh for just a few dollars → p. 41

INSIDER TIP ➔ **Bizarre volcanic desert**

Tongariro Crossing: an exciting day's hike close to still active craters. A Maori chieftain once gave this national park to the British Crown → p. 63

INSIDER TIP ➔ **Twinkling lights**

From the lookout on Mount Victoria, Wellington's local mountain (196 m/643 ft), the view takes in the whole city and the harbour. If you go up in the evening, New Zealand's capital is a sea of lights spread out at your feet → p. 63

INSIDER TIP ➔ **A bite with a view**

The *Beach Bar* in the pretty little resort of Sumner near Christchurch serves breakfast, lunch or tea right on the edge of the sea – pure bliss → p. 73

INSIDER TIP ➔ **Off the beaten track**

The locals are largely left to their own devices in the wild but temperate rainforest of the *Catlins* with its numerous idyllic waterfalls and even more lonely bays (photo below) → p. 79

INSIDER TIP ➔ **Fresh, fresher, freshest**

Fleur's Place is an authentic fish restaurant with its own smokehouse. Its speciality is muttonbird – a traditional Maori dish → p. 79

INSIDER TIP ➔ **Typically West Coast**

Okarito is undiluted, harsh coastal living on the Tasman Sea between the dense rainforest and the Southern Alps. Only 30 people still live in this former gold-diggers' settlement → p. 83

INSIDER TIP ➔ **South Island's sandy northern-most point**

Off-road safaris take you to the remote dunes at *Farewell Spit* and its fascinating bird reserve → p. 90

INSIDER TIP ➔ **Romantic nights**

If you are completely exhausted from visiting all the various sights in Queensland, head for the little place Clyde and recharge your batteries in the historic walls of the old hotel, *Oliver's Central Otago* – beautifully located, peaceful and atmospheric → p. 97

INSIDER TIP ➔ **Kiwi spotting**

Tiptoe after the shy, flightless and almost blind kiwi, New Zealand's national bird, which is most likely to be found in the dark undergrowth on *Stewart Island* (photo left) → p. 101

INSIDER TIP ➔ **The silent fjord**

The rainforest in New Zealand's largest national park, Fiordland, is still a wild and inaccessible place today. A day-tour takes you across deep Lake Manapouri to *Doubtful Sound*. And then just listen to the silence that envelops it and hear your own heart beat → p. 104



BEST OF ...

GREAT PLACES FOR FREE

Discover new places and save money

FREE
FOR
FREE

● *Free view from a crater*

Sky Tower is an expensive proposition – while on top of *Mount Eden*, an almost 200 m/660 ft-high extinct volcano, Auckland spreads out below you for free – though only during the open hours of the surroundings parks → [p.35](#)

● *Cold sea, hot springs*

No money needed here, just a bit of time. At *Hot Water Beach* on Coromandel Peninsula the earth turns on the hot tap at low tide and geothermal spring water bubbles up through the sand. Just dig a bit and let yourself be warmed up → [p.40](#)

● *Public WC as a work of art*

In *Kawakawa*, using the public convenience comes with an art experience free of charge. A New Zealander by choice, Friedensreich Hundertwasser put his artistic talents to a good use → [p.52](#)

● *All of New Zealand under one roof*

At the fantastic *Te Papa Tongarewa* national museum in Wellington you only have to pay admission fees for some special exhibitions. Usually visitors get to experience the unusual insights into New Zealand's nature and culture completely free of charge → [p.64](#)

● *Gannet tour*

There are many ways to reach the gannets on the mainland, but the only one that does not cost anything is a six hour walk both ways along the beach. If the water levels are not too high, it is a great way to experience New Zealand's countryside → [p.48](#)

● *Outdoor glowworms*

Experiencing the magical glowworms in the Waitomo caves is not cheap, but the natural illumination outside the caves after dark is completely free. You can witness it during the wild and romantic *Rukakuri Bush Walk*, a circular walking route that leads through an exciting valley. Pack a flashlight! → [p.60](#)

● ● ● Dots in guidebook refer to "Best of ..." tips

ONLY IN NEW ZEALAND

Unique experiences

● *Art Nouveau par excellence*

In *Napier* you should definitely stroll around the attractive streets – a unique journey back through the history of design to when Art Nouveau was also all the rage as an architectural style too. No other town in the world can boast such a complete and consistent adherence to this one building style → [p.46](#)

● *The birthplace of New Zealand*

Visit the pretty place where the State of New Zealand was born: on the dramatic coastline with a view of the enchanting Bay of Islands. The *Waitangi Treaty Grounds* have been preserved as a kind of open-air museum today where the eventful beginnings of the nation are kept alive → [p.50](#)

● *Maori folklore*

You can get a good insight into the Maori culture in Rotorua where New Zealand's first immigrants hold large Polynesian performances. The culinary highlight of this folkloric event with dancing and singing is the *hangi* – a feast of traditional delicacies cooked in an earth oven and served in generous portions → [p.55](#)

● *Bird paradise on the edge of town*

Albatrosses spend most of their time in the air. On Otago Peninsula near Dunedin you can get a rare look at these magnificent birds at one of the few mainland colonies where the albatross chicks hatch in January/February → [p.80](#)

● *Rock hard and unique*

Every souvenir made of *greenstone* is a piece of New Zealand for back home. This type of jade is found exclusively on the west coast. In Hokitika, the centre of the greenstone trade, you can find both mass-produced articles and exquisite pieces of jewellery → [p.86](#)

● *Courage on a rope*

Bungee jumping (photo) is a Kiwi invention: leaping into nothing with just an elastic rope fixed to an ankle attachment to stop you. In and around the adventure playground of Queenstown there are many places you can jump from, even from a height of 134 m/440 ft at the *Nevis Bungy* → [p.95](#)



ONLY IN



DISCOVERY TOURS

1

NEW ZEALAND AT A GLANCE



START: ① Auckland
END: 29 Christchurch

Distance:
→ 4000 km/2485 mi

22 Days
Driving time
64 hours

COSTS: approx. 6700 NZ\$ (domestic flight, ferry, hire car including insurance, fuel, accommodation, food/drink, excursions)

IMPORTANT TIPS: Even short distances can take considerable time on account of New Zealand's winding roads.

Add an optional 23rd day for a return rail journey by **Coastal Pacific** from 29 Christchurch northwards along the coast to **Kaikoura** → p. 92 for some whale-watching.



Would you like to explore the places that are unique to this region? Then the Discovery Tours are just the thing for you – they include terrific tips for stops worth making, breathtaking places to visit, selected restaurants and fun activities. It's even easier with the Touring App: download the tour with map and route to your smartphone using the QR Code on pages 2/3 or from the website address in the footer below – and you'll never get lost again even when you're offline.



→ p. 2/3

Experience New Zealand's diversity from north to south with exciting detours to rocky and rugged coasts, deep fjords, wheezing geysers and the pristine, lush, green rain forests. There's time for activity and restful idleness: on fine sandy beaches, dreamy shores – or in an idyllic vineyard sipping a glass of fruity Sauvignon blanc.

Start at ① Auckland → p. 33, where the **Auckland Hop On Hop Off Explorer Bus** chauffeurs you to the main attractions. Don't miss the magnificent view from the **Sky Tower**, enjoy an evening meal in the **America's Cup Village**, and

DAY 1-2

① Auckland

