



## 9 Day Road Tour Auckland to Rotorua

**Route:** Auckland – Thames – Coromandel – Whitianga – Whangamata – Matamata – Rotorua.

### Day 1 Auckland – Arrival Day

Today we met at 12 noon. The first day of our trip is designed to allow visitors to settle in. Your tour leader will hold a trip orientation meeting prior to lunch. Time will be set aside to fit you to your rental bike, or unpack your own, and take a short ride in Cornwell Park.

**Meals:** L/D

**Cycling:** Short warm up ride

### Day 2 Auckland to Thames

After breakfast we leave the city by minibus and head for the village of Clevedon on the edge of the Hunua Ranges. It is here that we start cycling on quiet roads. On reaching the coast at Kawakawa Bay we will have our first sight of the Peninsula with the Coromandel Ranges rising steeply from the sea.

Continuing south down the Firth of Thames the narrow road hugs the coast on its way to Miranda Bird Sanctuary. There are two climbs today with a final flat run from Miranda.

**Meals:** B/L/D

**Cycling:**

Easy: Clevedon to Waharau (lunch) 38 km

Moderate: Clevedon to Waitakaruru 64 km

Challenging: Clevedon to Thames 90 km

### Day 3 Thames to Coromandel

We visit a working historic Gold Mine before heading north past many pohutukawa trees leaning over the road and beach. The butterfly and orchid centre at Tararu is well worth a visit. At Tapu we turn inland to visit the picturesque Rapaura Water Gardens and have lunch. Returning to the coast there are two hills to climb - with great views - before the final descent to Coromandel. The town once flourished as a goldmining town; now it is a centre for crafts-people and 'alternative lifers'. Some of the old houses have been beautifully restored..

**Meals:** B/L

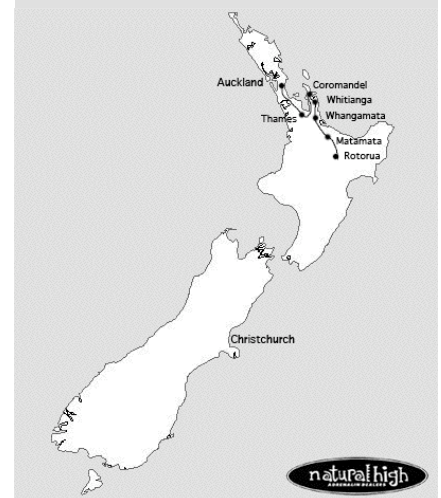
**Cycling:** Thames to Coromandel 66km. Short option Thames to Wilsons Bay 46km

#### Tour includes:

- 6 nights accommodation in 3 – 4 Star hotels, motels or chalets.
- 2 nights accommodation at farm stays.
- 7 Breakfasts (B)
- 3 Lunches (L)
- 5 Dinners (D)
- Tour guide
- Support vehicle & Luggage transfer

#### Grade:

2 Moderate



#### **Day 4 Coromandel to Whitianga**

This morning we take a ride on the Driving Creek Bush Railway and have the opportunity to view locally made pottery. Crossing the range to the east side of the peninsula, we have magnificent coastal views and great riding down to the seaside village of Whitianga.

**Meals:** B/D

**Cycling:** Coromandel to Whitianga 46km. Short option summit of Whangapoua to Whitianga 41km

#### **Day 5 Whitianga to Whangamata**

This morning we take the ferry to Flaxmill Bay. Past Purangi Vineyards, we head for Hahei where we can laze on the beach or walk to magnificent Cathedral Cove. After lunch we visit Hot Water beach where the natural mineral water rises through the sand. Those who have the energy can tackle the Pumpkin Hill climb with its views of Shoe and Slipper Islands and enjoy a great descent to Tairua before continuing around Tairua Harbour towards Whangamata.

**Meals:** B/L

**Cycling:** Whitianga to Whangamata 74km. Short option Whitianga to Tairua 38km.

#### **Day 6 Whangamata to Matamata**

Leaving the coast, we head inland through Karangahake Gorge to the Waikato Valley and south in the lee of the Kaimai Range. An attractive, varied route - gently undulating. An interesting diversion is to take the Historic Walkway (disused railway) through the gorge - you will need to walk a short distance through a tunnel. We are guests tonight of a local farming family.

**Meals:** B/D

**Cycling:**

Easy: Te Aroha to Matamata 40 km

Moderate: Waihi to Matamata 82 km

Challenging: Whangamata to Matamata. 111 km

#### **Day 7 Matamata**

We will take a day ride on some of the delightful little roads around the Waikato, or you can spend time relaxing and enjoying your farm stay.

**Meals:** B/D

#### **Day 8 Matamata to Rotorua**

A long gentle climb takes us to the bush clad Mamaku Plateau and a great descent, with panoramic views, to the thermal district of Rotorua. In the afternoon we will have time for some optional extras, such as the Agrodome (a sheep farming theme park) and a visit to the boiling mud pools and geysers for which Rotorua is renowned.

**Meals:** B/D

**Cycling:** Matamata to Rotorua 76km. Short option Matamata to HWY 5 34km.

#### **Day 9 Rotorua. Rest and Activities Day**

Rotorua has much to offer: Geysers and bubbling mud pools, a 4WD trip up Mt Tarawera, rafting, the Buried Village, the Green and Blue Lakes (a 32km cycle ride), fishing and, of course, shopping.

It is here we must sadly say farewell, a safe journey home and hope to see you again.

**Meals:** B

**Cycling:** No cycling today